شرح دعاء الاستخارة

Explanation Of Du`aa Al-Istikhaarah

Compiled By
Fahad Nawwaab Barmem

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وفقني الله وإياكم لما يحب ويرضاه من القول والعمل

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Transliteration

To understand the transliteration of Arabic terms in this book, readers should familiarize themselves with the symbols listed in the table below. While English pronunciation rules generally apply to the Arabic alphabet, specific symbols are necessary to represent Arabic sounds that lack English equivalents, such as the following:

Symbol	Stands for	English Equivalent Sounds
ʻ	(ء) Hamzah	The first consonant vocal sound uttered when saying: at, it, or oh.
Th, th	(ث) Thaa	Three, moth.
Ḥ, ḥ	(ح) Ḥaa	No equivalent. Produced in the lower throat, below "H".
Kh, kh	(خ) Khaa	No equivalent. Produced in the back of the mouth and the top of the throat.
Dh, dh	(ذ) Dhaal	There, mother.
Ṣ, ṣ	(ص) Ṣaad	A deeper "S" sound. Somewhat close to the "sc" in "muscle".
Ḍh, ḍh	(ض) Ḍhaad	Sounds deeper than a "D". Produced by touching the tongue to the mouth's roof.
Ṭ, ṭ	(ط) Ṭaa	Similar but deeper than a "T". Produced when the back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate.
Ẓh, ẓh	(ظ) Ẓhaa	A deeper thaal, produced by touching the tip of the tongue to the back of the front teeth.
`A, `a	(ع) ` Ayn	Produced at the bottom of the throat, underneath "H".
Gh, gh	(غ) Ghayn	A gurgling sound, produced at the back of the mouth. Similar to the sound made while gargling.
Q, q	(ق) Qaaf	Somewhat similar to the "C" in "coffee".

Preface

بسم الله والحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله ، وبعد

This is the revised edition of the book, Brief Notes On *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*.

Originally published in June 2013, it provided a brief overview, serving as a quick reference for the topic. However, over time, it became clear that elaborating on the explanation and adding more details was necessary, especially after I obtained Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen's رحمه الله *Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree*, and the *Fataawa* of Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله and Shaikh Ṣaaleḥ al-Fawzaan حفظه الله, which I previously did not have access to.

Upon reflection, this *Du`aa* reveals its profound meaning, with each word selected with meticulous care. Understanding the essence of this *Du`aa* acts as a crucial key to grasping the overall concept of *Du`aa*.

Fahad Nawwaab Barmem
January 28, 2026

رحم الله بناتي داليا ونورة

Introduction

بسم الله والحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله ، وبعد

The *Ḥadeeth* on how to perform *al-Istikhaarah* is one of the profound *Aḥaadeeth* that encapsulates the etiquette of supplication. Eight Companions, رضي الله عنهم أجمعين, have transmitted these *Aḥaadeeth* on *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* with different wording. These narrations eloquently and effectively convey the essence of supplication, providing a step-by-step guide for individuals on how to engage in sincere supplications at all times, while also explaining how these heartfelt prayers are answered.

The Prophet ﷺ was granted the gift of *Jawaami` al-Kalim*, which enabled him to express a great deal in just a few words. As the Prophet ﷺ said: **"I have been given *Jawaami` al-Kalim*** (words that are concise but comprehensive in meaning)**."** [1]

This *Du`aa* holds great importance, as evidenced by the way the Prophet ﷺ taught it to his Companions, just like he did with a Surah from the Qur'aan.

It is known by necessity that seeking guidance (*al-Istikhaarah*) involves several actions related to the heart, such as trust, sincere intention in seeking what is best, and a firm belief that Allaah will choose the best option between two matters.

---

[1] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7013) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (1062, 1063, 1066, 1067)
Imaam al-Bukhaaree reported that Ibn Shihaab al-Zuhree said: **"*Jawaami` al-Kalim* means that Allaah تعالى expresses in one or two statements or thereabouts the numerous matters that used to be written in the books revealed before (the coming of) the Prophet ﷺ (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ was given the gift of expressing in a few words all the benefits that were written in the previous scriptures)."**

This *Du`aa* teaches everyone to trust Allaah in every aspect of their lives, whether it's about religion, worldly life, or the Hereafter. This is because of Allaah's perfect knowledge and complete authority over everything. The only one who can truly help is Allaah, the One Who owns everything, Who has power over all creation, Who fears no consequences, Whose actions are not questioned, and Whose treasures never diminish.

This *Du`aa* also teaches us that Allaah تعالى always answers our supplications, either by granting us what we requested or by safeguarding us from greater harm.

Human weaknesses manifest in various ways, including physical vulnerabilities, wavering willpower, limited determination, lapses in *Imaan* (Faith), and insufficient patience, among others. Often, these deficiencies are linked with a lack of knowledge, ignorance, and a narrow perspective.

In this *Du`aa*, the supplicant seeks Allaah's help in two ways: *Isti`aanah*, which is seeking good (*Khair*) from Allaah; and *Istighaathah*, which is seeking Allaah's protection from harmful things. Even when asking for protection from harm, the individual is requesting Allaah تعالى to ward off harm from him and keep him safe from harm, which is a complete form of protection.

A primary reason people display impatience during supplication is their attachment to worldly life and their heedlessness about the Hereafter, as Allaah تعالى stated:

﴿تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ﴾

{You desire the materials of this world, but Allaah desires (for you) the Hereafter} [2]

[2] Surah al-Anfaal (8): 67

﴿بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا * وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ﴾

{But you prefer the worldly life, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting} [3]

﴿يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ﴾

{They know only the outside appearance of the life of the world, and they are heedless of the Hereafter} [4]

The purpose of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is not to guarantee that what you want will happen, but that Allaah will guide you to what is best, even if it's not what you thought you wanted. The essence of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is to find contentment in all our affairs, whether we like it or not.

Scholars have noted that the wording of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is not just an incantation; it's a reflection of the Believer's spiritual strength. It shows:

a. Submission TO Allaah's Will:

The Believer acknowledges that only Allaah knows what is truly good or harmful.

b. Contentment With Divine Decree:

Even if the outcome is contrary to one's desires, the Believer remains satisfied, knowing that Allaah chose what was best.

أبو داليا ونورة فهد نوابه محمد بارميم

Fahad Nawwaab Barmem

[3] Surah al-A`laa (87): 16-17

[4] Surah al-Room (30): 7

The Aḥaadeeth

The Aḥaadeeth concerning *Du`aa* and *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah*, despite slight variations in wording, have been narrated by numerous Companions, with no fewer than thirteen Companions narrating reports on its practice and significance.

Some narrations emphasize that the Prophet ﷺ himself would perform *al-Istikhaarah* to seek Allaah's guidance whenever he intended to undertake a matter, as found in the narrations of Abu Bakr and Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنهما. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ - despite receiving revelation - sought divine guidance in matters requiring choice and decision. This demonstrates the profound humility of the Prophet ﷺ and establishes *al-Istikhaarah* as a means of seeking Allaah's guidance rather than relying solely upon one's own judgment.

Other narrations highlight the Prophet's ﷺ diligence in teaching his Companions the method of *al-Istikhaarah* with great care, **"as he would teach them a Surah from the Qur'aan"**, as reported by Jaabir, Ibn Mas`ood, Ibn `Abbaas, and Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنهم.

Additionally, several narrations indicate that the Companions themselves would perform *al-Istikhaarah* whenever a need arose, following the example of the Prophet ﷺ. This is reflected in the reports of Anas, Zainab, `Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭaab, `Abdullaah Ibn Zubair رضي الله عنهم.

Taken together, these narrations clearly demonstrate that *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* is a firmly established Sunnah - practiced by the Prophet ﷺ, taught meticulously to his Companions, and widely observed by them and the generations that followed.

A. Aḥaadeeth On *Al-Istikhaarah*:

a. Jaabir Ibn `Abdullaah رضي الله عنهما

Jaabir Ibn `Abdullaah رضي الله عنهما narrated: The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us the way of doing *al-Istikhaarah*, in all matters, as he taught us a Surah from the Qur'aan. He ﷺ said: **"If any one of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make, he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer other than the compulsory ones and say (after the prayer):**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ العَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلاَ أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ – ثُمَّ تُسَمِّيهِ بِعَيْنِهِ – خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدُرْ لِي الخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ، ثُمَّ رَضِّنِي بِهِ

(O Allaah! I ask for guidance by the virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power, and I ask You for Your great blessings. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! If You know that this matter <<and he should mention it by name>> **is good for my religion, my worldly life, and my Hereafter then You ordain it for me, make it easy for me to get, and also bless me in it, and if You know that this matter is harmful to me in my religion, worldly life, and the Hereafter then keep it away from me and keep me away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me and make me satisfied with it)."** The Prophet ﷺ added that then the supplicant should name (mention) his need. [5]

[5] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1162, 6382, 7390), Sunan Abu Dawood (1538), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (480), Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (3253), Sunan Ibn Maajah (1383), Musnad Aḥmad (14707), Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan (887), and *al-Du`aa* of al-Ṭabaraanee (1303)

b. Abu Sa`eed Al-Khuḍhree رضي الله عنه

Abu Sa`eed al-Khuḍhree رضي الله عنه narrated: I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ say: **"If anyone intends to do something, let him say:**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا لِلْأَمْرِ الَّذِي تُرِيدُ خَيْرًا لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعِيشَتِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي، فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي وَأَعِنِّي عَلَيْهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا لِلَّذِي يُرِيدُ شَرًّا لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعِيشَتِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْخَيْرَ أَيْنَمَا كَانَ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

(O Allaah! I seek Your guidance by virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power. I also ask from Your favors. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! If such-and-such matter <<that which he is seeking>> **is good for my religion, my worldly life, and for my welfare in the life to come, then You ordain it for me, make it easy for me to get, and help me to accomplish it. And if You know that such-and-such matter** <<that which he is seeking>> **is harmful to me in my religion, worldly life, and for my welfare in the life to come, then keep it away from me. And ordain for me what is good, wherever it may be. And there is no might nor power except with Allaah.)"** [6]

[6] Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan (885), Musnad Abu Ya`laa (1342), and *al-Du`aa* of al-Ṭabaraanee (1304), and graded as "Ḍha`eef" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha'eefah (2305) and al-Ḍha'eef al-Jaami` (318). One of its narrators, `Eesa Ibn `Abdullaah Ibn Maalik has been graded as "Weak" by some scholars. `Alee Ibn al-Madeeni said: "He is *Majhool*" (i.e., someone whose condition is unknown). Moreover, he has opposed many of those who narrated the Aḥaadeeth on *al-Istikhaarah*. Many Companions have narrated the Ahaadeeth on *al-Istikhaarah*, but none of them mentioned the statement: "And there is no might nor power except with Allaah" at its end, and this is an assumption from `Eesa Ibn `Abdullaah, and he is mistaken in it. See al-Ḍha'eefah (2305) of Shaikh al-Albaanee for further read.

c. Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: **"If anyone of you intends to do something, let him say:**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا خَيْرًا لِي فِي مَعِيشَتِي وَخَيْرًا لِي فِي عَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَبَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ وَرَضِّنِي بِقَدَرِكَ

(O Allaah! I seek Your guidance by virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power. I also ask from Your favors. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! If such-and-such matter is good for my worldly life, and good for my welfare in the life to come, then ordain it for me, and bless me in it. But if it is other than that, then ordain for me whatever is good for me and make me satisfied with Your Decree.)" [7]

[7] Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan (1745), and al-Iḥsaan (886) and *al-Du`aa* of al-Ṭabaraanee (1306), and graded as "Ḥasan-Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in his checking of Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan. Shaikh al-Albaanee also graded is "Ḥasan" in al-Ḍha'eefah (5/331-332).

d. `Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه

`Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه narrated: Whenever the Prophet ﷺ did *al-Istikhaarah* about a matter that he intended to do, he ﷺ would say…

In another narration, `Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه said: The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us the way of doing *al-Istikhaarah* as he would teach us a Surah from the Qur'aan. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: **"If anyone of you intends to do something, let him say:**

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَتَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ هَذَا الَّذِي أُرِيدُ خَيْرًا لِي فِي دِينِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَيَسِّرْ لِي، وَإِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ خَيْرًا لِي فَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ، يَقُولُ ذَلِكَ ثُمَّ يَعْزِمُ

(O Allaah! I ask for guidance by the virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power, and I ask You for Your Favors. For You know, and I do not, and You are capable, and I am not; and You know the unseen. So, if this, that which I intend, is good for my religion and my Hereafter, then make it easy for me. But if something other than this is better for me, then ordain for me whatever is good for me.) Let him say this and thereafter be firm." [8]

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[8] Al-Ṭabaraanee in Mu`jam al-Kabeer (10012, 10052, 10421), in al-Awsaṭ (3723, 3724, 7332), and in al-Ṣagheer (524), and in *al-Du`aa* (1301, 1302), with slight difference in wordings. Al-Haithamee in al-Majma` (3673) said: al-Ṭabaraanee reported this in all his three Mu`jams (al-Kabeer, al-Awsaṭ, and al-Ṣagheer). In the chain of narration reported in al-Kabeer, there is Ṣaaleḥ Ibn Moosa al-Ṭalḥee, and he is "Dha`eef". In the chain of narration in al-Awsaṭ, and al-Ṣagheer, there are men who are weak in Ḥadeeth (referring to Ismaa`eel Ibn `Ayyaash and Abu Haneefah Nu`maan Ibn Thaabit). Al-Ṭabaraanee reported this Ḥadeeth in his books with different chains, but all of them are "Dha`eef". Al-Bazzaar also reported this in his Musnad (1528) from the chains of Ṣaaleḥ Ibn Moosa al-Ṭalḥee, al-Bazzaar said about him: "Ṣaaleḥ is not strong" (not reliable).

e. `Abdullaah Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما

f. `Abdullaah Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنهما

`Aṭaa' Ibn Abee Rabaaḥ narrated from Ibn `Umar and from Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهم. They both said: "We used to learn (the *Du`aa* of) *al-Istikhaarah* like how one of us would learn a Surah from the Qur'aan.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ قَضَاءٍ فَاجْعَلْ عَاقِبَتَهُ إِلَى خَيْرٍ

(O Allaah! I seek guidance by virtue of Your Knowledge, and appeal to You to support me with Your Power. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! Whatever You have decreed for me, make its outcome good.)" [9]

Makḥool narrated that Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنه said: **"A man performs *al-Istikhaarah*, seeking guidance from Allaah تبارك وتعالى. So, Allaah تعالى chooses for him, but the person becomes angry with his Lord عز وجل (because it is not what he desired). However, he soon looks at the outcome and finds it to be better for him."** [10]

[9] Al-Ṭabaraanee in Mu`jam al-Kabeer (11477), al-Awsaṭ (935), and in *al-Du`aa* (1305). Its chain of transmission is "Ḍha'eef Jiddan". In it is `Abdullaah Ibn Haanee who was accused of lying, and Abu Ḥaatim al-Raazee abandoned him. See al-Majma` (3676) of al-Haithamee.

[10] Al-Zuhd of Ibn al-Mubaarak (1740)

g. Abu Ayyoob Al-Anṣaaree رضي الله عنه

Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣaaree رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to him: **"Keep your engagement (marriage proposal) a secret. Then perform ablution and do it well, then pray as much as Allaah has prescribed for you. Then praise your Lord عز وجل, and then say:**

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ لِي فِي فُلَانَةَ خَيْرٌ وَسَمِّهَا بِاسْمِهَا فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَآخِرَتِي فَاقْدِرْهَا لِي، وَإِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا لِي فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايَ وَآخِرَتِي فَاقْضِ لِي بِهَا وَقَدِّرْهَا لِي

(O Allaah! You are capable, and I am not, and You Know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! If there is good for me in so-and-so (and mention her by her name) in my religion, my worldly life, and my Hereafter, then decree her for me (in marriage). But if someone, other than her, is better for me in my religion, my worldly life, and my Hereafter, then decree her for me and ordain her for me (in marriage).)" [11]

[11] Musnad Aḥmad (23596), Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Khuzaimah (1220), Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim (1195, 2731) and graded as "Ḍha'eef" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha'eefah (2875) and Ḍha'eef al-Jaami` (1092). One of its narrators, Ayoob Ibn Khaalid, is "Weak" in Ḥadeeth, and his father, Khaalid Ibn Abee Ayyoob is "Majhool al-`Ain", and his son was the sole narrator of the Ḥadeeth from him.

h. Sa`d Ibn Abee Waqqaaṣ رضي الله عنه

Sa`d Ibn Abee Waqqaaṣ رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مِنْ سَعَادَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ اسْتِخَارَتُهُ اللهَ، وَمِنْ سَعَادَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ رِضَاهُ بِمَا قَضَى اللهُ، وَمِنْ شِقْوَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ تَرْكُهُ اسْتِخَارَةَ اللهِ، وَمِنْ شِقْوَةِ ابْنِ آدَمَ سَخَطُهُ بِمَا قَضَى الله عز وجل

"From (the signs of) prosperity for the son of Aadam is his requesting Allaah for guidance, and from (the signs of) prosperity for the son of Aadam is his satisfaction with what Allaah decreed for him, and from (the signs of) misery for the son of Aadam is his avoiding to request guidance from Allaah, and from (the signs of) misery for the son of Aadam is his anger with what Allaah decreed for him." [12]

[12] Musnad Aḥmad (1444), and the wording his is, Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2151), and graded as "Ḍha'eef" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha`eefah (1906) and Ḍha`eef al-Jaami` (5300). There is a consensus among the scholars that Muḥammad Ibn Abee Ḥumaid is "Ḍha`eef".

i. Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated:

لَمَّا تُوُفِّيَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ كَانَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَلْحَدُ، وَآخَرُ يَضْرَحُ، فَقَالُوا: نَسْتَخِيرُ رَبَّنَا، وَنَبْعَثُ إِلَيْهِمَا، فَأَيُّهُمَا سُبِقَ تَرَكْنَاهُ، فَأُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمَا، فَسَبَقَ صَاحِبُ اللَّحْدِ «فَلَحَدُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ

"When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, there was a man in al-Madeenah who used to make a niche in the grave and another who used to dig graves without a niche. They said: 'Let us pray *al-Istikhaarah* to our Lord and call for them both, and whichever of them comes first, we will let him do it.' So, they were both sent for, and the one who used to make the niche-grave came first, so they made a niche-grave for the Prophet ﷺ." [13]

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

يَا أَنَسُ، إِذَا هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ فَاسْتَخِرْ رَبَّكَ فِيهِ سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ، ثُمَّ انْظُرْ إِلَى الَّذِي يَسْبِقُ إِلَى قَلْبِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْخَيْرَ فِيهِ

"O Anas! If you intend to do something, seek guidance from your Lord about it seven times, then consider what comes first to your heart, for therein lies the good." [14]

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[13] Sunan Ibn Maajah (1557) and graded as "Ḥasan-Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee, and also there are two supporting chains for this, see Aḥkaam al-Janaaiz (183)

[14] Ibn Sunnee in "`Amal al-Yaum wal-lailah" (598), but it is not authentic. Al-Ḥaafidh said in al-Fatḥ (11/187): "If it (the narration) were authentic, this would have been the most popular opinion, however, its chain of transmission is extremely weak." It was also graded as "Ḍha'eef Jiddan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha`eefah (6908) and Ḍha`eef al-Jaami` (735). Al-`Iraaqee said: "In its chain of transmission is Ibraaheem Ibn al-Baraa' who is extremely weak. Therefore, this Ḥadeeth is invalid and cannot be used as evidence." Al-`Uqailee said: "He used to attribute baseless narrations to trustworthy narrators." Ibn Ḥibbaan said: He used to attribute fabricated narrations to trustworthy narrators." Ibn Ḥibbaan also said in Al-Majrooḥeen (1/117): "It is not permissible to mention him in books except to criticize him."

j. Zainab Bint Jaḥsh رضي الله عنه

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated:

لَمَّا انْقَضَتْ عِدَّةُ زَيْنَبَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ لِزَيْدٍ: اذْكُرْهَا عَلَيَّ. قَالَ زَيْدٌ: فَانْطَلَقْتُ، فَقُلْتُ: يَا زَيْنَبُ أَبْشِرِي! أَرْسَلَنِي إِلَيْكِ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ يَذْكُرُكِ. فَقَالَتْ: مَا أَنَا بِصَانِعَةٍ شَيْئًا حَتَّى أَسْتَأْمِرَ رَبِّي، فَقَامَتْ إِلَى مَسْجِدِهَا وَنَزَلَ الْقُرْآنُ وَجَاءَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ فَدَخَلَ بِغَيْرِ أَمْرٍ

"When the `Iddah of Zainab was over, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said to Zaid: **"Propose marriage to her on my behalf."** Zaid went and said: "O Zainab, rejoice, for the Messenger of Allaah has sent me to you to propose marriage on his behalf." She said: **"I will not do anything until I consult my Lord."** So she went to the place (inside her house) where she usually prayed and (the Aayah of) the Qur'aan (about her marriage) was revealed. Then the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ came and entered her (home) without any formalities." [15] [16] [17]

[15] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (89-1428) and Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (3251) and the wording is his, and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The Aayah is in Surah al-Aḥzaab (33): 37

[16] **Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Katheer** رحمه الله said: "When Zainab's marriage to Zaid was over and he had separated from her, Allaah تعالى married her to the Prophet ﷺ, and the One Who was her Wali (guardian) in this marriage was Allaah Himself, in the sense that He revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that he should go in unto her without any Wali, contractual agreement, dowry or witnesses among mankind." [Tafseer Ibn Katheer]

[17] **Al-Nawawee** رحمه الله commented, saying: "Perhaps she prayed al-Istikhaarah out of fear of falling short in her duties towards the Prophet ﷺ." [Sharḥ al-Nawawee on Saḥeeḥ Muslim (9/228)]

k. `Abdullaah Ibn Zubair رضي الله عنه

Aṭaa' narrated: The House (*Ka`bah*) was burnt during the reign of Yazeed Ibn Mu`awiyah, when the people of Syria fought (in Makkah). And it happened with (the *Ka`bah*) what was (in store for it). Ibn al-Zubair رضي الله عنهما left it (in the same state) until the people came in the season (of Hajj). (The idea behind it was) that he wanted to exhort them or incite them (to war) against the people of Syria. When the people had arrived, he said to them: "O people, advise me about the *Ka`bah*. Should I demolish it and then rebuild it from its very foundation, or should I only repair the damaged part?" Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما said: "An idea has occurred to me according to which I think that you should only repair (the portion which has been) damaged, and leave the House (in that very state in which) people embraced Islaam, (and leave those very stones in the same state) when people embraced Islaam, and over which Allaah's Messenger ﷺ had raised it." Thereupon Ibn al-Zubair said: **"If the house of any one of you is burnt, he would not be contented until he had reconstructed it, then what about the House of your Lord (which is far more important than your house)? I will seek guidance from my Lord (i.e., perform *al-Istikhaarah*) three times, and then I will make up (my mind) about this affair."** After performing *al-Istikhaarah* three times, he decided to demolish it. The people apprehended that calamity might fall from heaven on those persons who would be first to climb (over the building for the purpose of demolishing it), till one (took up courage, and ascended the roof), and threw down one of its stones. When the people saw no calamity befalling him, they followed him and demolished it until it was razed to the ground. Then Ibn al-Zubair erected pillars and hung curtains on them until the construction was completed. Ibn al-Zubair said: I heard `Aaishah رضي الله عنها say that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ had said: **"Were it not that your people have only recently abandoned Kufr (disbelief) and that I do not have the means to rebuild it, (if I had the means) I would have definitely encompassed five cubits of al-Ḥijr area into it, and I would have constructed a door through which the people could enter, and a door**

through which they could exit." Ibn Al-Zubair said: "Today I have the means (to spend) and I do not fear the people." So he added five cubits of area from the side of al-Ḥijr to it, and there appeared (the original) foundations of (al-Ḥijr upon which Ibraaheem عليه السلام had built the *Ka`bah*), and the people saw that, and it was upon this foundation that the wall was raised. The length of the *Ka`bah* was eighteen cubits, and he added ten cubits to its length, and he gave it two doors; one for entering, and one for exiting. When Ibn al-Zubair was killed, al-Ḥajjaaj wrote to `Abdul-Malik Ibn Marwaan telling him of that, and telling him that Ibn al-Zubair had built it on foundations that had been seen by witnesses of good character among the people of Makkah. `Abdul-Malik wrote to him saying: "We do not approve of what Ibn al-Zubair did. As for what he added to its length, leave it as it is, and as for what he added to it of al-Ḥijr, put it back as it was, and block up the door that he opened." So he demolished it and rebuilt it.[18]

[18] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (402-1333), The Book of Ḥajj, Chapter: Demolition the *Ka`bah* and rebuilding it.

l. `Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭaab رضي الله عنه

Sa`eed Ibn al-Musayyab narrated: `Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭaab wrote down concerning inheritance by grandparents and those who leave neither ascendants nor descendants (*Kalalaah*). He performed *al-Istikhaarah* and waited, seeking guidance from Allaah, saying: **"O Allaah! If You know there is good in it, then implement it."** When he was stabbed, he called for the parchment and erased it, so no one knew what was in it. He said: **"I had written concerning inheritance by grandparents and those who leave neither ascendants nor descendants, and I was seeking guidance from Allaah regarding it. I have decided to leave you on what you were upon."** [19]

`Urwah narrated: `Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭaab رضي الله عنه wanted to compile a book on Sunnah (Prophetic traditions), so he consulted the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ about it. They advised him to do so, and he spent a month performing al-Istikhaarah, seeking Allaah's guidance regarding it. Then one day, Allaah had made a firm decision for him. `Umar said: **"I wanted to compile a book on Sunnah, but I remembered a people who came before you who wrote books, and they devoted themselves to them and neglected the Book of Allaah, and I swear by Allaah that I will never mix the Book of Allaah with anything else."** [20]

[19] Muṣannaf `Abdul Razzaaq (17494), Muṣannaf Ibn Abee Shaibah (33392), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by its verifiers.

[20] Muṣannaf `Abdul Razzaaq (21558), and its chain is authentic.

m. Abu Bakr Al-Ṣiddeeq رضي الله عنه

`Aaishah رضي الله عنها narrated from Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddeeq رضي الله عنه that whenever the Prophet ﷺ intended to do a matter, he ﷺ would say:

اللَّهُمَّ خِرْ لِي وَاخْتَرْ لِي

Allaahumma khir lee wakhtar lee

"O Allaah, make it good for me and choose for me." [21]

B. The Significance Of Multiple Narrators

The diversity of the narrators - ranging from the closest elders like Abu Bakr and `Umar to the younger generation like Ibn Abbaas, Ibn `Umar, and Anas, and even female Companions like Zainab Bint Jahsh - tells us several things:

a. Universal Applicability:

It wasn't just for leaders or scholars; it was for every Muslim, regardless of age or status.

b. A Continuous Lesson:

The Prophet ﷺ taught it repeatedly across different years and in different settings.

c. A Practical Legacy:

The Companions did not just memorize the words; they passed down the culture of asking Allaah for the best choice.

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[21] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3516), Musnad Abu Bakr (44), al-Bazzaar in his Musnad (59), Aby Ya`la (44), al-Baihaqee in al-Shu`ab (402), all of them through narration of Zanfal Ibn `Abdullaah. Al-Tirmidhee said about Zanfal: "This is a strange Ḥadeeth, we do not know it except from the Ḥadeeth of Zanfal and he is considered as "Ḍha`eef" by the scholars of Ḥadeeth and he is the sole narrator of this Ḥadeeth and no one else corroborated it." It was also graded as "Ḍha'eef" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha`eefah (1515) and Ḍha`eef al-Jaami` (4330).

While Doing Al-Istikhaarah, We Are…

1. …seeking Allaah's Guidance for the appropriate course of action.

2. …affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge.

3. …affirming Allaah's Absolute Power.

4. …seeking from Allaah's Great Blessings.

5. …affirming Allaah's Ability to do things.

6. …affirming our inability without Allaah's help.

7. …affirming Allaah's Complete Knowledge about all things.

8. …acknowledging our ignorance.

9. …seeking Allaah's Guidance in what is good for us regarding our *Deen*, our *Dunyaa*, and our *Aakhirah*.

10. …asking Allaah to ordain it, make it easy, and bless it.

11. …seeking Allaah's Protection from what is harmful for us regarding our *Deen*, our *Dunyaa*, and our *Aakhirah*.

12. …asking Allaah to distance it from us and distance us from it if it is harmful.

13. …asking Allaah to ordain whatever is good for us.

14. Most importantly: …asking Allaah to make us content and satisfied with whatever choice He تعالى makes for us.

The Significance And Benefits Of Performing Al-Istikhaarah

A. Spiritual Benefits:

a. Manifestation Of Tawḥeed:

Performing *al-Istikhaarah* is a profound act of worship that demonstrates a Believer's absolute dependence on Allaah alone. It is an opportunity to engage in sincere supplication (*Du`aa*), which is one of the most beloved acts of worship to Allaah.

b. Adherence To Sunnah:

Praying *al-Istikhaarah* is following the tradition of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It is a practice (*Sunnah*) that was taught by the Prophet ﷺ for "each and every matter," both big and small, highlighting the importance of this *Du`aa* as a regular part of a Muslim's life. It is an act of worship that brings spiritual rewards and solidifies one's connection with Allaah.

c. Strengthens Faith:

It reinforces the belief that Allaah has perfect Knowledge, Power, and Wisdom, and that we, as human beings, are limited in our understanding. By turning to Allaah in times of uncertainty, a person affirms his Faith (*Imaan*) and puts his complete trust (*Tawakkul*) in the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

d. Deepens Trust In Allaah:

Performing *al-Istikhaarah* is a manifestation of reliance (*Tawakkul*) on Allaah and strengthens a Believer's Faith and relationship with Allaah, reminding one that Allaah's Wisdom surpasses human understanding. The outcome, whether it is what one hoped for or not, is ultimately in

one's best interest. Thus, encouraging total dependence on Him for all affairs.

e. Spiritual Connection:

Turning to Allaah in moments of uncertainty cultivates a stronger spiritual connection and affirms one's belief in His guidance. It reminds the Believers to trust Allaah's plan, acknowledging that Allaah knows what is best for them, even if they may not understand it at the time.

f. Promotes Humility:

It's a way of acknowledging that one doesn't have all the answers and is seeking help from the One who does.

g. Clarity In Decision Making:

When a person sincerely performs *al-Istikhaarah*, he is more likely to be guided toward a choice that is truly beneficial for him regarding his Faith, life, and the Hereafter. It helps clarify a decision by putting one's trust in Allaah.

h. Acceptance Of Outcome:

It helps a Believer accept whatever result comes his way, with the understanding that it is part of Allaah's plan.

B. Practical Benefits:

a. Better Decision-Making:

Performing *al-Istikhaarah* helps one make choices that align with long-term goodness, rather than just short-term convenience. Performing *al-Istikhaarah* helps individuals make more informed decisions, ensuring that their choices are made with the blessing and guidance of Allaah. It leads to greater satisfaction and contentment, knowing one's affairs are left to Divine Wisdom.

b. Avoids Regret:

After seeking Allaah's guidance for what is best and protection from what is harmful, one is less likely to make impulsive or harmful decisions that one might later regret.

c. Divine Guidance And Protection:

Allaah's guidance helps steer Believers away from decisions that may lead to negative consequences, especially when it comes to life-altering choices. Performing *al-Istikhaarah* is a plea to Allaah for guidance, leading individuals towards beneficial outcomes and away from harm, assisting not only in worldly matters but also in the spiritual life and the Hereafter.

d. Clarity In Ambiguity:

Especially useful when options seem equally viable or confusing, performing *al-Istikhaarah* can illuminate the path forward. A person may feel inclined toward a certain course of action, or he may experience a sense of detachment from one option, indicating it is not the right choice.

e. Attainment With Ease:

Allaah may make the path to the right decision easier and remove any obstacles. On the other hand, if a decision is not suitable for the individual, Allaah might create obstacles or cause his heart to reject it.

f. Patience In Waiting:

Sometimes, answers may not come immediately, and *al-Istikhaarah* teaches patience in awaiting Allaah's decision, accepting that the outcome might not always be immediate or clear.

g. Blessings In Life:

Performing *al-Istikhaarah* is a means of seeking blessings (*Barakah*). Seeking guidance through *al-Istikhaarah* can bring blessings (*Barakah*)

to one's actions. Even if the decision doesn't seem ideal initially, it may lead to unanticipated positive outcomes over time.

h. Contentment with Allaah's Decree:

One of the greatest benefits is achieving acceptance and contentment with one's fate (تقدير - destiny). Performing al-Istikhaarah provides reassurance, no matter the result. It enables Believers to accept Divine Will confidently and eliminates any regret or second thoughts.

C. Emotional Benefits:

a. Emotional Comfort, Inner Peace, And Relief from Anxiety:

Knowing that one has sought Allaah's guidance brings peace, emotional comfort, tranquility, and reduces anxiety about the outcome. When facing difficult decisions, performing *al-Istikhaarah* brings peace, knowing that one has consulted Allaah and that He will guide him toward what is best. It alleviates stress and uncertainty about outcomes.

b. Contentment And Satisfaction:

A major benefit of performing *al-Istikhaarah* is the profound feeling of peace and contentment it brings, regardless of the outcome. Even if the outcome is not what was expected, the person remains content with what Allaah has decreed, understanding that it is ultimately best for him.

c. Removes Doubt:

People often face doubt and confusion when making decisions. By performing *al-Istikhaarah*, a person may feel a sense of calm, whether the outcome is favorable or not.

d. Confidence In Action:

Even when making difficult decisions, performing *al-Istikhaarah* provides the courage to move forward with conviction. After thorough research, seeking advice, and supplicating to Allaah through *al-Istikhaarah*, a person can move forward with confidence, knowing he has placed his trust in the All-Knowing.

e. Inner Conviction:

It is not about a miracle (*Karaamah*), a sign, or a dream, but rather a profound sense of ease and inner conviction in the heart to proceed with a matter or to turn away from it.

f. Builds Confidence:

Regularly performing *al-Istikhaarah* is associated with greater optimism, hope, and resilience. Knowing that the individual has sought guidance improves self-confidence and brings mental clarity during times of uncertainty.

g. Good Outcomes:

Those inspired to pray *al-Istikhaarah* are promised a good outcome and fulfilment, as Allaah Himself opens doors of mercy and goodness for those who seek His help sincerely

The Ḥadeeth

The following *Du`aa* is one of the three narrations reported by Imaam al-Bukhaaree in his Ṣaḥeeḥ.

Jaabir Ibn `Abdullaah رضي الله عنهما narrated: The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us the way of doing *al-Istikhaarah*, in all matters, as he taught us a Surah from the Qur'aan. He ﷺ said: **"If any one of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make, he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer other than the compulsory ones and say (after the prayer):**

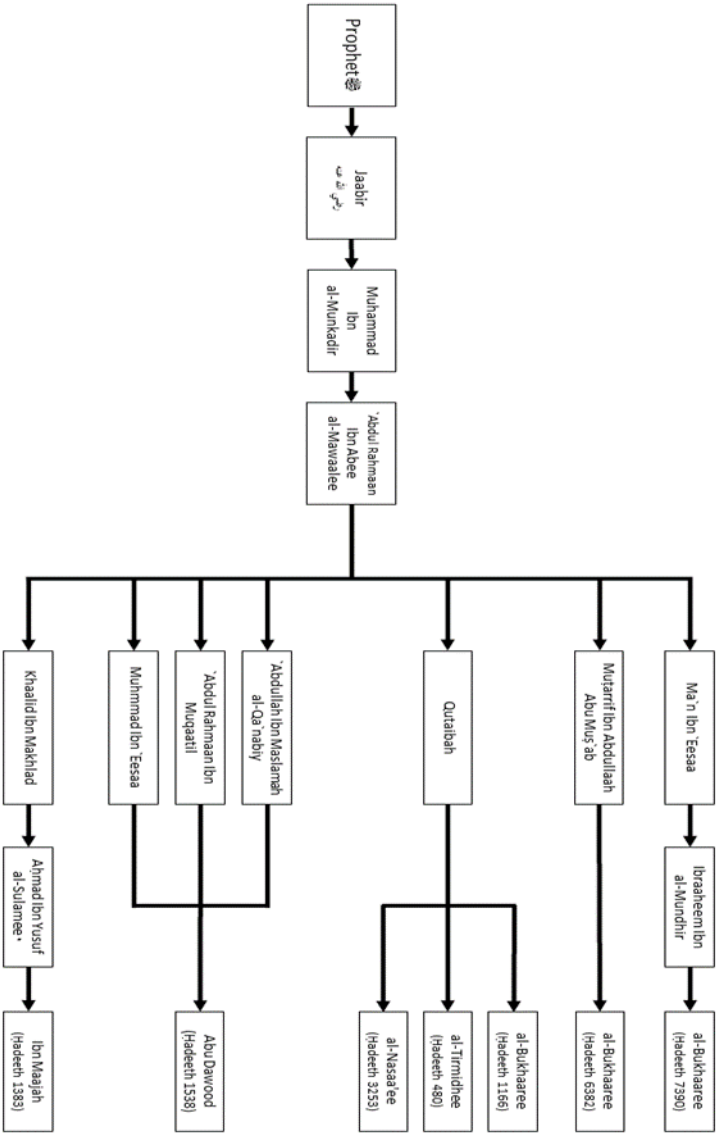
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ العَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلاَ أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ – ثُمَّ تُسَمِّيهِ بِعَيْنِهِ – خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدُرْ لِي الخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ، ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ

Allaahumma innee astakheeruka bi-`ilmika, wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, wa as'aluka min faḍhlik-al-`aẓheem. Fa innaka taqdiru walaa aqdiru, wa ta`lamu walaa a`lamu, wa anta `allaamu-l-ghuyoob. Allaahumma, in kunta ta`lamu anna haadha-l-amra khairul lee fee Deeni wa ma`aashee wa `aaqibati amree, faqdurhu lee wa yas-sirhu lee thumma baarik lee feeh. Wa in kunta ta`lamu anna haadha-l-amra shar-rul-lee fee Deeni wa ma`aashi wa `aaqibati amree, faṣrifhu `annee waṣ-rifnee `anhu. Waqdur lee-l-khaira ḥaithu kana, thumma arḍhinee bih.

(O Allaah! I ask for guidance by the virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power, and I ask You for Your great blessings. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen. O Allaah! If You know that this matter <<and he should mention it by name>> **is good for my religion, my worldly life, and my Hereafter then You ordain it for me, make it easy for me to get, and also bless me in it, and if You know that this matter is harmful to me in my religion, worldly life, and the Hereafter then keep it away from me and keep me away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me and make me satisfied with it).”** The Prophet ﷺ added that then the supplicant should name (mention) his need. [22]

The *Ḥadeeth* of Jaabir رضي الله عنه concerning *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is the most authentic on this subject. Except for Muslim, the other five collections - al-Bukhaaree, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhee, al-Nasa’ee, and Ibn Maajah - have reported this narration through various chains. All of them trace back to `Abdul Raḥmaan Ibn Abee al-Mawaalee, from Muḥammad Ibn al-Munkadir, from Jaabir رضي الله عنه.

[22] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1162, 6382, 7390).


Prophet ﷺ
Jaabir رضي الله عنه
Muhammad Ibn al-Munkadir
`Abdul Rahmaan Ibn Abee al-Mawaalee
Khaalid Ibn Makhlad
Muhmmad Ibn 'Eesaa
`Abdul Rahmaan Ibn Muqaatil
`Abdullah Ibn Maslamah al-Qa'nabiy
Qutaibah
Mutarrif Ibn Abdullaah Abu Muş'ab
Ma'n Ibn 'Eesaa
Ahmad Ibn Yusuf al-Sulamee
Abu Dawood (Hadeeth 1538)
al-Nasaa'ee (Hadeeth 3253)
al-Tirmidhee (Hadeeth 480)
al-Bukhaaree (Hadeeth 1166)
al-Bukhaaree (Hadeeth 6382)
Ibraaheem Ibn al-Mundhir
Ibn Maajah (Hadeeth 1383)
al-Bukhaaree (Hadeeth 7390)

Explanation

1. "The Prophet ﷺ Used To Teach Us"

The statement of Jaabir رضي الله عنه:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يُعَلِّمُنَا

"The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us…"

A. The Prophet ﷺ As A Guide:

Indeed, Allaah تعالى conferred great blessings upon mankind by sending Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a guide. He ﷺ was sent to lead people toward the worship of Allaah and to direct them toward what is good for them in this world and the Hereafter. There is nothing good except that he ﷺ informed us about it, and there is nothing harmful except that he ﷺ warned us about it. As Allaah تعالى stated:

﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

{Indeed Allaah bestowed a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from themselves, reciting unto them His Aayaat (the Qur'aan), and purifying them (from sins by their following his teachings), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur'aan) and al-Ḥikmah (the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ), while before that they were in clear error.} [23]

[23] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 164

Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه said:

The Prophet ﷺ left us (in such a state) that there was not a bird flapping its wings in the air except that he ﷺ would teach us about it. He (Abu Dharr) added: The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَا بَقِيَ شَيْءٌ يُقَرِّبُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ، ويُبَاعِدُ مِنَ النَّارِ، إِلَّا وَقَدْ بُيِّنَ لَكُمْ

"There is nothing left which would take you closer to the Jannah and distance you from the Fire, except that it has been made clear to you." [24]

The Prophet ﷺ went to great lengths to teach us everything that would benefit us in this life and the Hereafter.

Salmaan al-Faarisee رضي الله عنه said that a man from the *Mushrik* (polytheists) said to him: "Your Companion (meaning, the Prophet ﷺ) even teaches you how to go to the toilet!" He replied:

أَجَلْ، لَقَدْ نَهَانَا أَنْ نَسْتَقْبِلَ الْقِبْلَةَ لِغَائِطٍ أَوْ بَوْلٍ، أَوْ أَنْ نَسْتَنْجِيَ بِالْيَمِينِ، أَوْ أَنْ نَسْتَنْجِيَ بِأَقَلَّ مِنْ ثَلَاثَةِ أَحْجَارٍ، أَوْ أَنْ نَسْتَنْجِيَ بِرَجِيعٍ أَوْ بِعَظْمٍ

"Indeed, he forbade us from facing the *Qiblah* when defecating or urinating, forbade us from using our right hand for cleaning ourselves, and forbade us from using less than three stones (for cleaning), and forbade us from cleaning ourselves with dung or a bone." [25]

[24] Al-Ṭabaraanee in Mu`jam al-Kabeer (1647) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (1803). Al-Ḥaakim reported a similar narration from Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه in his al-Mustadrak (2136), and Shaikh al-Albaanee graded it as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" (authentic due to corroborating narrations) in Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Targheeb (1700)

[25] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (57-262) and the four Sunan.

⅋. Responsibility Of Those Who Know To Teach Those Who Do Not Know:

Abu Bakrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

فَلْيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ، فَرُبَّ مُبَلَّغٍ أَوْعَى مِنْ سَامِعٍ

"Let those who are present convey to those who are absent. For perhaps the one to whom it is conveyed will understand it better than the one who (first) hears it." [26]

The *Ḥadeeth* of Jaabir on *al-Istikhaarah* and the above *Ḥadeeth* of Abu Bakrah رضي الله عنهما serve as an example that those who know should teach those who do not. Elders should instruct the young, and parents ought to educate their children on matters that will benefit them not only in this world but also in the Hereafter. Many parents focus solely on their children's worldly affairs while neglecting their spiritual concerns for the Hereafter. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ﴾

{They know only the outside appearance of the life of the world, and they are heedless of the Hereafter} [27]

Some of us teach our children to have good manners with creation while neglecting to teach them about good manners with the Creator. Good manners with Allaah involve worshiping Him, loving Him above all else, maintaining hope in His promises, fearing His punishment, and having good thoughts about Him. Teaching children about issues related to the Hereafter should take precedence over all worldly matters.

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[26] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (67, 1741, 4406, 5550, 7078, 7447) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (29-1679, 30-1679). This has also been reported from Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنه, Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1739)

[27] Surah al-Room (30): 7

2. "The Way Of Doing Al-Istikhaarah"

And the statement of Jaabir رضي الله عنه:

الِاسْتِخَارَةَ فِي الْأُمُورِ كُلِّهَا كَمَا يُعَلِّمُنَا السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

"The way of doing *al-Istikhaarah*, in all matters, as he would teach us a Surah from the Qur'aan."

A. The Significance Of *Du`aa Al-Istikhaarah*:

The phrase that the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions how to perform *al-Istikhaarah*, just as he ﷺ taught them a Surah from the Qur'aan, highlights the significance of this subject matter.

Ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه said:

عَلَّمَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَكَفِّي بَيْنَ كَفَّيْهِ التَّشَهُّدَ، كَمَا يُعَلِّمُنِي السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

"The Prophet ﷺ taught me the *Tashah-hud* as he taught me a Surah from the Qur'aan while my hand was between his hands." [28]

Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ يُعَلِّمُنَا التَّشَهُّدَ كَمَا يُعَلِّمُنَا السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

"The Prophet ﷺ used to teach us the *Tashah-hud* just as he used to teach us a Surah from the Qur'aan." [29]

[28] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6265) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (59-402)
[29] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (60-403)

And we know that the final *Tashah-hud* is one of the *Rukn* (pillars) of *al-Ṣalaah*. If this pillar is missed, the *Ṣalaah* becomes invalid till the person performs it. Therefore, it is even more important to learn about the *Tashah-hud* and the other pillars of *al-Ṣalaah*.

Similarly, individuals should focus on learning and teaching how to perform *al-Istikhaarah*, just as they would learn a Surah from the Qur'aan. Whenever confusion arises, and one is unsure of the best course of action, they should promptly return to performing *al-Istikhaarah*.

Ibn al-Ḥajr رحمه الله stated regarding this comparison:
"It is said that *al-Istikhaarah* is generally necessary in all matters, similar to how the recitation of the Qur'aan is generally required in (every) prayer."

It is also said: "This comparison involves preserving its letters and the order of its words, avoiding any additions or deletions, with focus on learning and memorizing it." [30]

The phrase: **"just as he ﷺ would teach a Surah from the Qur'aan,"** indicates that it was widespread and prevalent among the Companions, and it is a characteristic of a Muslim society. [31]

This *Ḥadeeth* emphasizes the importance of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* in the life of a Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ was keen to explain and teach it to his Companions, just as he would teach them a Surah from the Qur'aan, highlighting its importance. Since it is so essential, it is not appropriate for a Muslim to be ignorant of it, to neglect it, to be lazy about it, or to rely on something else, as this shows a lack of understanding or commitment.

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[30] Fatḥ al-Baaree (11/184)
[31] It is a characteristic of Muslim society because it encourages reliance (*Tawakkul*) on Allaah rather than on oneself.

The description by Jaabir رضي الله عنه, that the Prophet ﷺ taught them *al-Istikhaarah*, **"as he would teach us a Surah from the Qur'aan"** is profound. It signifies:

a. Precision:
The wording of the *Du`aa* is specific, and just like the Qur'aan, one should try to memorize it accurately. [32]

b. Permanence:
It is a tool intended to remain with the Believers throughout their lives. Similar to how the Qur'aan was revealed for mankind's benefit, [33] *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is also meant for their well-being.

c. Importance:
It shouldn't be treated as a "minor" *Sunnah*, but rather as a vital component of a Muslim's spiritual core.

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[32] Those who are weak in Arabic or haven't memorized it are excused. However, others should strive to memorize this and other Du`aas as accurately as possible. This is important because when the Prophet ﷺ taught a Du`aa to al-Baraa' and asked him to repeat it, al-Baraa' repeated it, but instead of saying: "wa bi Nabiyyika", he said: "wa bi Rasoolika". The Prophet ﷺ corrected him to say it the way he ﷺ taught him, which was: "wa bi Nabiyyika." [See Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (247, 6311, 6313, 6315, 7488) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (56-2710)]

[33] As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ﴾

{And indeed We have put forth every kind of example in this Qur'aan, for (the benefit of) mankind} [Surah al-Kahf (18): 54]

ℬ. *Al-Istikhaarah*: A Replacement For Superstitions And Pagan Rituals:

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"The statement of the Companion: 'He ﷺ would teach us *al-Istikhaarah* as he would teach us a Surah of the Qur'aan', points to the special care the Prophet ﷺ took in teaching them *al-Istikhaarah*, just as he taught them the *Tashah-hud* and a Surah from the Qur'aan. This *Du`aa* is filled with praises for Allaah, and Allaah تعالى made it a substitute for the practices that were done in the *Jaahiliyyah* (pre-Islaamic days of ignorance).

In the *Jaahiliyyah*, people sought luck or made decisions through belomancy (الأزلام *al-Azlaam*, art of divination [34] by use of arrows). [35] They would take three wooden pieces shaped like arrows, place them inside a jar or bag, and then shake the jar or bag. One piece would have the inscription: "Do it," another: "Don't do it," and the third would be blank. Without looking, the individual would pull out one of the arrows. If it read: "Do it," they would proceed with that action. If it said: "Don't do it," they would refrain. However, if the arrow was blank, they would repeat the process. [36] Consequently, Allaah replaced this old superstitious practice with this *Du`aa*." [37]

Additionally, during the *Jaahiliyyah*, people would make decisions based on augury (التَطَيُّر *al-Tatayyur*, the practice of observing the behavior or flight patterns of birds to receive omens). If a bird flew in a

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[34] Divination is the attempt to gain insight into a question or situation by way of rituals or practices. Some practices of divination include astrology, tarot card reading, tea-leaf reading, Ouija boards, and countless more.

[35] The prohibition of using *al-Azlaam* is mentioned twice in Surah al-Maa`idah

[36] Another method was that they would write on the arrow heads: "God allows it", "God forbids it", and the third would be blank, and they would shoot these arrows. The arrow that flew the furthest indicated the answer.

[37] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (10/294)

specific direction, they would embark on the journey, but if the bird flew in another direction, they would cancel their plans.

Similarly, people often associate anything bad that happens to them with black cats, or they believe that hanging a horseshoe at the entrance to their homes will bring them good fortune. This is *Shirk*!

Islaam came to eliminate all these superstitions and replace them with trust in Allaah تعالى.

3. "If Any One Of You Is Deliberating..."

The statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ

"If any one of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make."

A. *Al-Istikhaarah* Is When A Person Decides To Act But Lacks Clarity:

Meaning: When a person plans to do something but faces multiple options, or when a situation becomes complex and he cannot decide which path to follow.

The *Ḥadeeth*, in its entirety, indicates that *al-Istikhaarah* is not recommended when thoughts and ideas come to mind, which hardly anyone is free from. This is supported by the statement of the Prophet ﷺ in another narration:

إِذَا أَرَادَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَمْرًا

"If one of you wants to do something," [38]

So, the "general concern" in the first narration is clarified by "the intent to do" in the second narration, and thoughts are excluded from this.

Al-Istikhaarah is primarily performed for a specific matter when a person feels uncertain about a particular decision. For instance, if

[38] From the narrations of `Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood, Abu Sa`eed al-Khuḍhree, and Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنهم as reported by al-Ṭabaraanee in *al-Du`aa* (1302, 1304, 1306) respectively

someone wants to travel but cannot decide whether to go this week or next, or if they are considering marrying someone and are unsure about it, then in these situations, performing *al-Istikhaarah* is recommended because they do not know if it will be beneficial, as only Allaah knows the hidden and the unseen.

٦. *Al-Istikhaarah* Is Not For Obligatory Or Forbidden Things:

Regarding matters that are *Waajib* (obligatory) or *Mustaḥabb* (liked or encouraged), there is no need for *al-Istikhaarah* to decide whether an individual should do them. Similarly, regarding matters that are *Ḥaraam* (forbidden) or *Makrooh* (disliked), there is no need for *al-Istikhaarah* to decide whether one should avoid them.

Example: Performing *al-Hajj* is obligatory once in a lifetime for every able Muslim. So, a person who fulfills the conditions cannot supplicate, saying: "O Allaah! Should I perform *al-Hajj* or not?", but he is allowed to supplicate, saying: "O Allaah! Should I perform *al-Hajj* this year or next year?"

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said (paraphrased):

"This (*al-Istikhaarah*) is regarding complex matters, and the person is undecided, hesitating, and unable to act firmly. If it is a matter about which there is no doubt or hesitation, then performing *al-Istikhaarah* is not required. For example, suppose a person is debating whether to pray *Fajr Ṣalaah* in the *Masjid* or not. In this case, there is no need for *al-Istikhaarah* (because we know the *Khair* is in offering the prayers with the congregation). Similarly, day-to-day activities like grocery shopping don't require *al-Istikhaarah*." [39]

Similarly, a person is not allowed to supplicate for something evil or sinful, as Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

[39] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/253)

يُسْتَجَابُ لأَحَدِكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَدْعُ بِإِثْمٍ أَوْ قَطِيعَةِ رَحِمٍ، أَوْ يَسْتَعْجِلَ فَيَقُولُ: دَعَوْتُ فَلاَ أَرَى يَسْتَجِيبُ لِي، فَيَدَعُ الدُّعَاءَ

"The supplication of any of you is answered as long as he does not supplicate for something sinful or for severing the ties of kinship or become impatient and say: I supplicated, but it was not answered, and so he stops making supplication." [40]

This *Ḥadeeth* does not include the concern for forbidden (*Ḥaraam*) and disliked (*Makrooh*) things, because the mere fact that they are forbidden indicates that they are evil for the slave of Allaah. Therefore, one should not seek guidance from Allaah about them, as they contradict the *Sharee`ah* (Islaamic Jurisprudence).

Al-Nu`maan Ibn Basheer رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ الْحَلاَلَ بَيِّنٌ وَإِنَّ الْحَرَامَ بَيِّنٌ وَبَيْنَهُمَا مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ لاَ يَعْلَمُهُنَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَمَنِ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعِرْضِهِ وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ وَقَعَ فِي الْحَرَامِ كَالرَّاعِي يَرْعَى حَوْلَ الْحِمَى يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَرْتَعَ فِيهِ أَلاَ وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَلِكٍ حِمًى أَلاَ وَإِنَّ حِمَى اللَّهِ مَحَارِمُهُ أَلاَ وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلاَ وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ

"What is lawful is clear and what is unlawful is clear, but between them are certain doubtful things about which many people do not know. So he who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and honor blameless. He who indulges in doubtful things has, in fact, indulged in Ḥaraam (unlawful) things, just as a shepherd who grazes (his animals) near the Ḥimaa (private pasture) of someone else, and at any moment he is liable to get in it. Beware! Every king has a

[40] Al-Adab al-Mufrad (655) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (92-2735)

Ḥimaa, and the Ḥimaa of Allaah on the earth is His unlawful (forbidden) things. Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body; if it is sound (reformed), the whole body is sound, but if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt, and that is the heart." [41]

C. Learning Through Examples:

The following are a few of the many examples of important matters when the Companions رضي الله عنهم and the *Salaf al-Ṣaaleḥ* (pious predecessors) performed *al-Istikhaarah*.

a. The Companions' Example:

Did you know that the Companions performed *al-Istikhaarah* prayer before selecting the type of grave for the Prophet ﷺ?

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated:

لَمَّا تُوُفِّيَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ كَانَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَلْحَدُ، وَآخَرُ يَضْرَحُ، فَقَالُوا: نَسْتَخِيرُ رَبَّنَا، وَنَبْعَثُ إِلَيْهِمَا، فَأَيُّهُمَا سُبِقَ تَرَكْنَاهُ، فَأُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمَا، فَسَبَقَ صَاحِبُ اللَّحْدِ «فَلَحَدُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ

"When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, there was a man in al-Madeenah who used to make a niche in the grave and another who used to dig graves without a niche. They said: 'Let us pray *al-Istikhaarah* to our Lord and call for them both, and whichever of them comes first, we will let him do it.' So, they were both sent for, and the one who used to make the niche-grave came first, so they made a niche-grave for the Prophet ﷺ." [42]

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[41] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (52, 2051) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (107-1599, 108-1599) and the wording is his

[42] Sunan Ibn Maajah (1557) and graded as "Ḥasan-Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee, and there are two supporting chains, see Aḥkaam al-Janaaiz (183)

b. Zainab Bint Jaḥsh's Example:

Zainab Bint Jaḥsh رضي الله عنها performed *al-Istikhaarah* when she was informed that the Prophet ﷺ had sent a proposal to her.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated:

لَمَّا انْقَضَتْ عِدَّةُ زَيْنَبَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ لِزَيْدٍ: اذْكُرْهَا عَلَيَّ. قَالَ زَيْدٌ: فَانْطَلَقْتُ، فَقُلْتُ: يَا زَيْنَبُ أَبْشِرِي! أَرْسَلَنِي إِلَيْكِ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ يَذْكُرُكِ. فَقَالَتْ: مَا أَنَا بِصَانِعَةٍ شَيْئًا حَتَّى أَسْتَأْمِرَ رَبِّي، فَقَامَتْ إِلَى مَسْجِدِهَا وَنَزَلَ الْقُرْآنُ وَجَاءَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ فَدَخَلَ بِغَيْرِ أَمْرٍ

"When the `Iddah of Zainab was over, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said to Zaid: "Propose marriage to her on my behalf." Zaid went and said: "O Zainab, rejoice, for the Messenger of Allaah has sent me to you to propose marriage on his behalf." She said: "I will not do anything until I consult my Lord." So she went to the place (inside her house) where she usually prayed and (the Aayah of) the Qur'aan (about her marriage) was revealed. Then the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ came and entered her (home) without any formalities." [43] [44]

Al-Nawawee رحمه الله commented, saying:

وَلَعَلَّهَا اسْتَخَارَتْ لِخَوْفِهَا مِنْ تَقْصِيرٍ فِي حَقِّهِ ﷺ

"Perhaps she prayed *al-Istikhaarah* out of fear of falling short in her duties towards the Prophet ﷺ." [45]

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[43] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (89-1428) and Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (3251) and the wording is his, and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The Aayah is in Surah al-Aḥzaab (33): 37

[44] **Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Katheer** رحمه الله said: "When Zainab's marriage to Zaid was over and he had separated from her, Allaah تعالى married her to the Prophet ﷺ, and the One Who was her Wali (guardian) in this marriage was Allaah Himself, in the sense that He revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that he should go in unto her without any Wali, contractual agreement, dowry or witnesses among mankind." [Tafseer Ibn Katheer]

[45] Sharḥ al-Nawawee on Saḥeeḥ Muslim (9/228)

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated:

فَكَانَتْ زَيْنَبُ تَفْخَرُ عَلَى أَزْوَاجِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ تَقُولُ: زَوَّجَكُنَّ أَهَالِيكُنَّ،
وَزَوَّجَنِي اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْ فَوْقِ سَبْعِ سَمَاوَاتٍ

"Zainab used to boast before the other wives of the Prophet ﷺ and used to say: "You were given in marriage by your families, while I was married (to the Prophet) by Allaah from over seven Heavens." [46]

c. `Abdullaah Ibn Al-Zubair's Example:

When the *Ka`bah* got damaged during the conflict, `Abdullaah Ibn al-Zubair رضي الله عنه was left with the task of demolishing the *Ka`bah* and rebuilding it, or just repairing the damaged part. So, he said:

إِنِّي مُسْتَخِيرٌ رَبِّي ثَلَاثًا، ثُمَّ عَازِمٌ عَلَى أَمْرِي

"I will seek guidance from my Lord (i.e., perform *al-Istikhaarah*) three times, and then I will make up (my mind) about this affair." After performing *al-Istikhaarah* three times, he decided to demolish the *Ka`bah* and rebuild it.[47]

d. Imaam Al-Bukhaaree's Example:

Whenever Imaam al-Bukhaaree رحمه الله would sit to record the *Aḥaadeeth* in his Ṣaḥeeḥ, he would perform *al-Istikhaarah*.

Al-Farbari narrated that Imaam al-Bukhaaree رحمه الله said:

ما أدخلت في الصحيح حديثا إلا بعد أن استخرت الله تعالى وتيقنت صحته

"I did not include any *Ḥadeeth* in al-Ṣaḥeeḥ until after I prayed *al-Istikhaarah*, asking Allaah for guidance, and being certain of its soundness." [48]

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[46] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7420)

[47] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (402-1333), The Book of Ḥajj, Chapter: Demolition of the Ka`bah and rebuilding it.

[48] Al-Madkhal ilaa Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1/76)

Al-Farbari also narrated that Imaam al-Bukhaaree رحمه الله said:

ما وضعتُ في كتابي الصَّحيح حديثًا إلَّا اغتسلتُ قبل ذلك، وصلَّيتُ ركعتَين

"I did not put in my book al-Ṣaḥeeḥ a single *Ḥadeeth* except I took a shower before that and prayed two Rak`aat." [49]

[49] Muqaddamah al-Fatḥ (1/490), Tabaqaat al-Ḥanaabilah (1/374), Taareekh Baghdad (2/9), Tahdheeb al-Asmaa wal-Lughaat (1/74/1), Wafiyaat al-'Ayaan (4/190), Tahdheeb al-Kamaal (no. 1169), Tabaqaat by as-Subki (2/220), and Siyaar 'Alaam an-Nubala (12/402)

4. "He Should Offer A Two-Rak`aat Prayer..."

The statement of the Prophet ﷺ:

فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِ الفَرِيضَةِ، ثُمَّ لِيَقُلْ

"he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer other than the obligatory ones and thereafter (i.e., after the prayer) **say..."**

It is from Allaah's mercy that He تعالى sent His Messenger ﷺ with guidance and true religion. He تعالى sent him to renew for them the religion of their father Ibraaheem عليه السلام, and to spread Tawḥeed and His worship throughout the earth. People during the times of ignorance - following their polytheistic beliefs - would make decisions regarding their worldly affairs and interests through divination with arrows and by observing the direction of birds.

So Allaah تعالى compensated the Muslims with two *Rak`aat* of *al-Istikhaarah*, because they are a sign that a person is relying on Allaah, is entrusting the matters to Him, and which leads him to be content with Allaah's Decree and Judgment.

A. The Terminology Of The Word Al-Ṣalaah:

Linguistic Meaning:

The word *al-Ṣalaah* has many meanings, but its original meaning is *al-Du`aa* (supplication/invocation). As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ﴾

{And invoke Allaah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them} [50]

***Shar`ee* (Legislative) meaning:**
It is the worship of Allaah with specific wordings and actions, which begins with *Takbeer* (saying: Allaahu Akbar) and ends with *Tasleem* (saying: Assalaam `alaikum wa rahmatullaah – towards the right and the left).

Al-Ṣalaah is also referred to by part of its actions, such as Ruk`oo (bowing) and Sujood (prostration). As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾

{and bow with those who bow (in worship to Allaah)} [51]

While describing some of the characteristics of the Believers, Allaah تعالى said:

﴿الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ﴾

{who bow down and prostrate (in prayer)} [52]

And Allaah تعالى said to Maryam عليها السلام:

﴿يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾

{O Maryam, be devoutly obedient to your Lord and prostrate and bow with those who bow (in prayer)} [53]

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[50] Surah al-Tawbah (9):103
[51] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 43
[52] Surah al-Tawbah (9): 1
[53] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 43

And in this Ḥadeeth, the Prophet ﷺ said:

فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ

"he should offer a bowing (i.e., al-*Ṣalaah*) (consisting of) two-Rak`aat."

Rabee`ah Ibn Ka`b al-Aslamee رضي الله عنه narrated:

كُنْتُ أَبِيتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ فَأَتَيْتُهُ بِوَضُوئِهِ وَحَاجَتِهِ فَقَالَ لِي: سَلْ. فَقُلْتُ: أَسْأَلُكَ مُرَافَقَتَكَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ! قَالَ: أَوْ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ؟ قُلْتُ: هُوَ ذَاكَ. قَالَ: فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ

I used to live with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ at night. I would bring water for his ablution and serve him. He ﷺ said to me: **"Ask!"** I said: "I want to be with you in Paradise." He ﷺ said: **"Or something else?"** I said: That is it. He ﷺ said: **"Then help me to achieve this for you by devoting yourself to making prostrations in abundance."** [54]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله **said:**

"Plentiful *Sujood* (prostrations) will necessitate lots of *Rukoo`* (bowing), and lots of *Rukoo`* (bowing) will require lots of *Qiyaam* (standing). This is because in every unit of *al-Ṣalaah*, there is only one *Rukoo`* (bowing) and two *Sujood* (prostrations). Hence, when the prostrations multiply, the bowing and standing will also multiply. The Prophet ﷺ only mentioned the prostration because it is the best position for the person who is praying." [55]

[54] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (226-489)
[55] Sharḥ Riyaaḍh al-Ṣaaliheen (2/103)

⅋. Some Clarifications Regarding the Two-Rak`aat:

In the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: **"he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer other than the obligatory ones"**, the focus is on two key points: it must be a two-*Rak`aat* prayer, and it should be a *Ṣalaah* other than the five obligatory ones.

A person should offer two *Rak`aat* (i.e., two units of) non-obligatory prayers, and at a time when the prohibition on praying does not apply. It is not allowed to offer prayers, especially for *al-Istikhaarah*, during prohibited times, such as after *Fajr* until the sun rises or after *`Aṣr* until the sun sets. The person should focus on his prayers and offer them with tranquility, and should recite this supplication after the *Tasleem* (salutation).

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"It appears that there is no difference if one prays two *Rak`aat* (units), especially for doing *al-Istikhaarah* or the two-*Rak`aat* (units) that have been prescribed, for example: the optional prayers. [56] So, one offers (any) two *Rak`aat* prayer.

But what appears to me is that the intended meaning is that a person should offer two (separate) *Rak`aat*, offering the *Taḥiyyatul-Masjid* (prayer upon entering the Masjid) or *Sunnah al-Raatibah* is insufficient. Instead, one must offer two *Rak`aat* prayers, especially for the purpose of doing *al-Istikhaarah*." [57]

[56] The optional prayers like *Sunnah al-Raatibah*, i.e., the 12 optional Rak`aat that one prays throughout the day, two before *Fajr*, four before *Ẓhuhr* and two after it, two after *Maghrib*, and two after *`Ishaa*.

[57] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/254)

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله also said:

"In this *Ḥadeeth*, there is proof that whenever a person faces a situation about which he is not sure and is deliberating a decision, he should offer two *Rak`aat* prayer and supplicate to Allaah. It is clear that the *Du`aa* must be made after performing *al-Ṣalaah* (i.e., after the *Tasleem* (salutation))." [58]

C. Some Rulings Regarding The Intention And The Sunnah Prayer For *Al-Istikhaarah*:

a. It is clear from *Ḥadeeth* that the person should perform a two-*Rak`aat* voluntary prayer due to the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: **"he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer"**. Therefore, the Sunnah of *al-Istikhaarah* cannot be done by praying just one *Rak`ah* or any odd number of *Rak`aat*. [59]

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[58] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/255)

[59] The words of the Prophet ﷺ referring to two *Rak`aat* of *al-Istikhaarah* indicate that it cannot be fulfilled with a prayer of one *Rak`ah*, like *Witr*, nor with a prostration of recitation (*Sajdah al-Tilaawah*), nor with the funeral prayer (*Salaah al-Janaazah*). The same ruling applies to *Taḥiyyatul Masjid*, the *Sunnah* prayer after *Ṭawaaf*, or any other *Sunnah* prayer where the Prophet ﷺ instructed to offer two *Rak`aat*. Example: A person enters the *Masjid*, prays only one *Rak`ah Witr*, and then sits down. In this case, the person has not fulfilled the obligation of *Taḥiyyatul Masjid*.

Al-`Aynee رحمه الله said:

قَوْله: (فليركع رَكْعَتَيْنِ) ، دَلِيل على أَن السّنة للإستخارة كَونهَا رَكْعَتَيْنِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا تجزىء الرَّكْعَة الْوَاحِدَة فِي الْإِتْيَان بِسنة الإستخارة

"The statement of the Prophet ﷺ: "Let him offer two *Rak`aat*", indicates that the Sunnah in *al-Istikhaarah* is to pray two *Rak`aat*; therefore, one *Rak`ah* is not sufficient for *al-Istikhaarah*." [Umdatul-Qaaree Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7/224)]

Al-Shawkaanee رحمه الله **said:**

قَوْلُهُ: (فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ) فِيهِ أَنَّ السُّنَّةَ فِي الِاسْتِخَارَةِ كَوْنُهَا رَكْعَتَيْنِ فَلَا تُجْزِئُ الرَّكْعَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ

"The statement of the Prophet ﷺ: "Let him offer two *Rak`aat*", indicates that the Sunnah in *al-Istikhaarah* is to offer two *Rak`aat*. So, one *Rak`ah* is not sufficient." [Nail al-Awṭaar (3/88)]

b. The statement of the Prophet ﷺ: **"he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer"**, indicates that one should not exceed more than two *Rak`aat*, as acts of worship are *Tawqeefi* (i.e., limited to Textual evidence).

c. The *Ḥadeeth* indicates that the intention of performing an obligatory prayer cannot be combined with any other intention. This is why he ﷺ said in the *Ḥadeeth*: **"other than the obligatory prayer."** Therefore, it is not valid to perform *al-Istikhaarah* with the two obligatory *Rak`aat* of Fajr.

d. His ﷺ saying: **"other than the obligatory prayer,"** indicates that *al-Istikhaarah* is valid with the two *Rak`aat* of *Taḥiyyatul-Masjid* (prayer upon entering the Masjid) or any other Sunnah prayers, as they are included in the general meaning of: **"other than the obligatory prayer."**

e. The scholars are of the opinion that one can perform *al-Istikhaarah* with the Sunnah prayers, as per the Prophet's ﷺ statement: **"other than the obligatory prayer."** This *Ḥadeeth* suggests that the intention behind performing the *al-Istikhaarah* prayer and the two *Rak`aat* of other voluntary prayers can be combined. The overlap between some acts of worship is permissible under specific conditions outlined in the books of *Fiqh* (Islaamic Jurisprudence).

f. Before performing *al-Istikhaarah*, it's essential to have a clear intention that precedes the *Ṣalaah*. The Prophet's ﷺ statement: **"If one of you intends to do something, let him offer two *Rak`aat* prayer,"** suggests that the person should make the intention for *al-Istikhaarah* before starting the prayer and maintain it till its completion. Therefore, if someone starts to pray two *Rak`aat* of Sunnah and then intends to perform *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* after having prayed, the general meaning of the *Ḥadeeth* suggests this is incorrect. The intention for *al-Istikhaarah* should be made before beginning the two *Rak`aat*.

g. This *Ḥadeeth* does not specify which *Surahs* should be recited while offering the two *Rak`aat* of *al-Istikhaarah*. Therefore, the recitation remains general and is not limited to any specific *Surah* or *Aayah*.

h. The apparent meaning of the *Ḥadeeth* supports the view that the supplication for *al-Istikhaarah* should be made after concluding the prayer with *Tasleem*, because he ﷺ said: **"So let him offer two *Rak`aat* and then say,"** which suggests that he ﷺ separated the two *Rak`aat* from the supplication.

D. Impermissibility Of Performing *Al-Istikhaarah* On Behalf Of Someone Else:

Du`aa is a test of one's Faith. If a person will not humble himself and supplicate to Allaah in times of need, then when will he?

**`Abdullaah bin Abu Saaleh al-Makkee** narrated: Once Ṭaawoos Ibn Kaisaan [60] visited while I was sick, and I said to him: O Abu `Abdul-Raḥmaan! Supplicate to Allaah for me. So, he (Ṭaawoos) responded:

ادع لنفسك فانه يجيب المضطر اذا دعاه

"Supplicate for your own self, for He (Allaah تعالى) responds (more quickly) to those in distress when they pray to Him." [61]

A personal supplication that comes from the heart is more likely to be answered, because the supplicant is genuinely in need.

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[60] Ṭaawoos Ibn Kaisaan was among the senior Taabi`een (students of the Companions). It is reported that he met around fifty Companions. He narrated Aḥaadeeth from `Aaishah, Zaid Ibn Thaabit, Abu Hurairah, Ibn `Abbaas and others رضي الله عنهم. He accompanied Ibn `Abbaas for a long period. Most of the Aḥaadeeth of Ibn `Abbaas in the Ṣaḥeeḥain are through Ṭaawoos. See Siyar A`laam al-Nubalaa of al-Dhahabee.

[61] Ṣifat al-Ṣafwah of Ibn al-Jawzee (1/454)

Performing *al-Istikhaarah* on behalf of another person is not permissible. Certain acts of worship are personal responsibilities and cannot be delegated. For example, one cannot take the Testimony of Faith (*Shahaadah*) on behalf of another person, nor can they perform the obligatory or optional prayers for someone else, nor marry on someone else's behalf.

The beautiful thing about *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* is that it is a personal conversation between an individual and his Lord. The supplication is spoken in the first person ("O Allaah, I ask You..."). The person who is in a state of need and confusion should turn to Allaah in prayer. The feeling of desperation and sincere reliance on Allaah is the core of this prayer, and that feeling can only be truly experienced by the one making the decision.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله described *al-Istikhaarah*, saying:

وَالْمَقْصُودُ أَنَّ الِاسْتِخَارَةَ تَوَكُّلٌ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَتَفْوِيضٌ إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتِقْسَامٌ بِقُدْرَتِهِ وَعِلْمِهِ، وَحُسْنُ اخْتِيَارِهِ لِعَبْدِهِ، وَهِيَ مِنْ لَوَازِمِ الرِّضَى بِهِ رَبًّا، الَّذِي لَا يَذُوقُ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ كَذَلِكَ، وَإِنْ رَضِيَ بِالْمَقْدُورِ بَعْدَهَا، فَذَلِكَ عَلَامَةُ سَعَادَتِهِ

"(It is) reliance (*Tawakkul*) on Allaah, entrusting one's affairs to Him, and seeking guidance through His Power (*Qudrah*) and Knowledge (*`Ilm*), and (believing) that He تعالى will only choose what is best for His servant, which is one of the requirements of being satisfied with Him as (your) Lord. Whoever is not satisfied with Him in this way will not experience the sweetness of Faith. And if he is content with what has been decreed, that's a sign of his happiness." [62]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"*Al-Istikhaarah* can only be done by the person who wants to do something or is thinking of doing it. It is not valid to pray *al-Istikhaarah* on behalf of another person, even if he delegates him to do that and

[62] Zaad al-Ma`aad (2/519)

says: "Pray *al-Istikhaarah* to Allaah for me (and ask Him to guide me concerning this matter)", because the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: **"If any one of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make, then let him pray two *Rak`aat*…"** as mentioned in the *Ḥadeeth*. By the same token, if two people enter the *Masjid* and one of them says to the other: "Pray two *Rak`aat* on my behalf as *Taḥiyyatul-Masjid* (prayer upon entering the *Masjid*), and I am going to sit down, that is not valid. *Al-Istikhaarah* prayer is connected to the person seeking guidance on a particular matter that he wants to do." [63]

Questioner:
"Is it permissible for me to perform the *al-Istikhaarah* prayer for someone else, and change the wording of the supplication so that it reads as follows: (O Allaah, if you know that this matter is good for her or him in her or his religion or worldly life), and so on?"

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله replied:
"I am not aware of any evidence supporting this. Instead, the Sunnah addresses those who wish to undertake a matter, as in the *Ḥadeeth*: **"If anyone of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make, then let him pray two *Rak`aat* and say: O Allaah…"** According to the Sunnah, it is meant for someone who plans to do something but is unsure, and he should seek guidance (through *al-Istikhaarah*).

Regarding someone performing *al-Istikhaarah* on behalf of others, I am not aware of any valid basis for this practice. Everyone, regardless of being a man or a woman, should perform *al-Istikhaarah* for themselves. The individual should recite the supplication that he knows or understands. Suppose he does not know the supplication mentioned in the *Ḥadeeth*. In that case, he should ask his Lord, saying: "O Allaah, make it easy for me to do what is best", "O Allaah, expand my heart so I can accept what is best and most beloved to You, which benefits me and is in my best interest." He should pray with an

[63] Liqaa' al-Baab al-Maftooh (83/22)

appropriate supplication (suited to the situation). All praise belongs to Allaah." [64]

Some individuals have turned *al-Istikhaarah* into a business and a means of generating income. They charge people and claim they will perform *al-Istikhaarah* on their behalf. These individuals deceive others and exploit those who are unaware and ignorant.

E. Raising Hands For Supplication:

Questioner:
"Should the supplicant raise his hands or not?"

Shaikh Ibn al-Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:
"We should return to the *Aṣl* (the base), and the *Aṣl* (the base) of *Du`aa* is that hands should be raised while supplicating. After a person has prayed two *Rak`aat*, he should raise his hands and supplicate." [65]

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله said:
"The person should raise his hands and recite this supplication after the two *Rak`aat*, after the *Ḍhuḥaa* prayer, (the Sunnah) prayers of *Ẓhuhr*, during the night prayers, at any time, but not during the prohibited times. The time for *al-Istikhaarah* is broad. He prays two *Rak`aat* with tranquility, then he recites this supplication after the *Tasleem* (salutation). He raises his hands and praises Allaah and sends blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ.

This is the Sunnah (i.e., the correct way). First, the person should praise Allaah and then send blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ, as this is one of the means for the supplication to be answered (quickly). After that, he should recite the *Du`aa*." [66]

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[64] From Shaikh Ibn Baaz's official website. Fatwa No. 10634
[65] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/255)
[66] From Shaikh Ibn Baaz's official website. See Fatwa No. 4480, 9519

F. The Significance Of The Two Rak`aat Before *Du`aa Al-Istikhaarah*:

a. *Al-Ṣalaah* As A *Waseelah*:

Doing good deeds before supplication is one of the forms of *Waseelah* (seeking nearness to Allaah), which is also highlighted in the *Ḥadeeth* of the three men who were trapped inside a cave. Each of them listed their good deeds and made heartfelt supplications, after which Allaah تعالى removed the boulder blocking the cave, allowing them to escape. [67]

b. *Al-Ṣalaah* As *Al-Ṣadaqah*:

Although *Ṣadaqah* traditionally refers to giving wealth or material support, *Islaam* also recognizes non-material acts of worship, such as *al-Ṣalaah*, *Dhikr*, or helping others, as forms of voluntary charity.

Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه narrated:

يُصْبِحُ عَلَى كُلِّ سُلَامَى مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ صَدَقَةٌ، فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ صَلَاةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَصِيَامٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَحَجٍّ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتَسْبِيحٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتَكْبِيرٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتَحْمِيدٍ صَدَقَةٌ

"Every morning, each joint of the son of Aadam is obligated to give chanty. So every prayer he prays is a charity, and fasting is charity, and the Ḥajj is charity, and the Tasbeeḥ is charity, and the Takbeer is charity, and the Taḥmeed is charity." And the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ enumerated these righteous deeds, then said:

يُجْزِئُ أَحَدَكُمْ مِنْ ذَلِكَ رَكْعَتَا الضُّحَى

"The two Rak`aat of Ḍhuḥaa will suffice all of these acts for you." [68]

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[67] See Appendix (3) for the complete *Ḥadeeth* and the permissible types of *Tawassul*

[68] Sunan Abu Dawood (1286), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه also narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

يُصْبِحُ عَلَى كُلِّ سُلَامَى مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ فَكُلُّ تَسْبِيحَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَحْمِيدَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَهْلِيلَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَكُلُّ تَكْبِيرَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَأَمْرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ صَدَقَةٌ وَنَهْيٌ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ صَدَقَةٌ. وَيُجْزِئُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ رَكْعَتَانِ يَرْكَعُهُمَا مِنَ الضُّحَى

"In the morning, charity is due on every joint bone of the body of every one of you. Every utterance of Allaah's Glorification (i.e., saying سبحان الله Sub-ḥaan Allaah) **is an act of charity, every utterance of His Praise** (i.e., saying الحمد لله al-Ḥamdulillaah) **is an act of charity, every utterance of declaration of His Oneness** (i.e., saying لا إله الا الله La ilaaha illallaah) **is an act of charity, and every utterance of declaration of His Greatness** (i.e., saying الله أكبر Allaahu Akbar) **is an act of charity; and enjoining Ma`roof (good) is an act of charity, and forbidding Munkar (evil) is an act of charity, and two Rak`aat Ḍhuḥaa prayers which one performs in the forenoon is equal to all this (in reward)."** [69]

In *Islaam*, good deeds and supplication (*Du`aa*) are closely linked. Performing a good deed before beseeching Allaah is often viewed as a way to purify the heart and earn Divine favor. Offering a voluntary prayer (*Nafil Ṣalaah*) of two *Rak`aat* before *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is a beautiful spiritual gesture that brings one closer to Allaah.

Allaah تعالى says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةً ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

{O you who have believed, when you (wish to) privately consult the Messenger, present before your consultation a charity. That is better

[69] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (84-720) and the wording is his, Sunan Abu Dawood (1285, 5243) with a different wording and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

for you and purer. But if you do not find (the means), then indeed, Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful} [70]

Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Katheer رحمه الله commented:

"Allaah commanded His believing servants, when any of them wanted to speak with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ in secret, to give away charity beforehand so that his charity cleanses and purifies him and makes him worthy of having a private counsel with the Prophet ﷺ. This is why Allaah تعالى said:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ﴾

{That will be better and purer for you}" [71]

Is it not fitting that one offers a voluntary prayer of two *Rak`aat* as a voluntary act of charity (*Ṣadaqah*) before engaging in a private conversation with Allaah? And to Allaah belongs the highest description.

In the Qur'aan, Allaah تعالى had instructed the Believers to give *Ṣadaqah* if they wanted to have a private conversation with the Prophet ﷺ, and in the *Sunnah*, the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Believers to pray two *Rak`aat* before they supplicated to Allaah for guidance (*al-Istikhaarah*).

Giving *Ṣadaqah* (in the form of financial help) before *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is not confirmed from the Sunnah or the actions of the Salaf (pious predecessors). But as the Prophet ﷺ said, praying two *Rak`aat* is considered as *Ṣadaqah*.

[70] Surah al-Mujjadilah (53): 12
[71] Tafseer Ibn Katheer

c. *Al-Ṣalaah* As An Act Of Obedience:

Whoever wishes Allaah سبحانه وتعالى to answer his supplications must first demonstrate active obedience to Him, as Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

{And when My servants ask you, (O Muhammad ﷺ), concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me (by obedience) and believe in Me that they may be (rightly) guided.} [72]

{So let them respond to Me}: This phrase is a call to action, not just making *Du`aa*, but by living in obedience to Allaah. *Du`aa* is not just about asking; it's also about responding to Allaah through obedience and trust.

The wisdom behind performing *al-Ṣalaah* before the *Du`aa* is to send forth good deeds before supplicating, and there is nothing more effective than *al-Ṣalaah*, because it contains obedience, glorification, and praise of Allaah, and expresses one's need for Him at all times.

d. *Al-Ṣalaah* As A Source Of Comfort:

Al-Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah highlights the importance of prayer in a Muslim's life. Instead of solely making supplication, the individual also performs a two *Rak`aat* prayer before supplicating for guidance and assistance. This reveals why the Prophet ﷺ would turn to prayer whenever faced with a complex matter.

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ used to say to Bilaal رضي الله عنه:

يَا بِلاَلُ أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ، أَرِحْنَا بِهَا

[72] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 186

"O Bilaal, call the Iqaamah for prayer, and give us comfort by it." [73]

e. Al-Ṣalaah As A Source Of Help:

Al-Ṣalaah is not merely a ritual, but a spiritual, emotional, and practical means of seeking strength, relief, and guidance from Allaah. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

{O you who believe! Seek (Allaah's) help through patience and prayers. Indeed, Allaah is with the steadfast.} [74]

Ḥudhaifah رضي الله عنه said:

انَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ إِذَا حَزَبَهُ أَمْرٌ صَلَّى

"Whenever something distressed the Prophet ﷺ, he (stood in) prayer." [75]

And in this *Ḥadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ

"If any one of you is deliberating about a decision he has to make, he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer…"

Al-Ṣalaah shifts focus from worldly anxieties to Divine Wisdom, calming the heart and mind. So, when a person prays with a calm heart, he is more focused, less agitated, and more willing to accept Allaah's decree, even if he does not understand the wisdom behind it.

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[73] Sunan Abu Dawood (4985, 4986), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[74] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 153

[75] Sunan Abu Dawood (1319), and graded as "Ḥasan li Ghairihee" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See Ṣaḥeeḥ Sunan Abu Dawood (1192)

f. Righteous Deeds Elevate The Supplications:

Supplications rise to Allaah, but good deeds give them weight and elevation. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ﴾

{To Him ascends good speech, and righteous work elevates it} [76]

Wahab Ibn Munabbih رحمه الله said:

مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَدْعُو بِغَيْرِ عَمَلٍ، مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَرْمِي بِغَيْرِ وَتَرٍ

"The similitude of the one who supplicates without (doing righteous) deeds is like the one who shoots an arrow without a bow." [77]

Wahab Ibn Munabbih رحه الله also said:

العملُ الصالحُ يبلغ الدعاء

"Righteous deeds raise the *Du`aa* higher." Then he recited the saying of Allaah تعالى:

﴿إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ﴾

{To Him ascends good speech, and righteous work elevates it} [78]

Shaikh al-Sa`dee رحمه الله said:

والعمل الصالح يرفع الكلم الطيب، فيكون رفع الكلم الطيب بحسب أعمال العبد الصالحة، فهي التي ترفع كلمه الطيب، فإذا لم يكن له عمل صالح، لم يرفع له قول إلى الله تعالى، فهذه الأعمال التي ترفع إلى الله تعالى، ويرفع الله صاحبها ويعزه.

"The righteous deeds elevate good words, so the elevation of good words corresponds to the level of the individual's good deeds, since

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[76] Surah al-Faatir (35): 10
[77] Muṣannaf Ibn Abee Shaibah (29269, 35170)
[78] Jaami` al-`Uloom wal-Ḥikam (1/276)

those deeds are what elevate his words. If a person has no good deeds to his credit, then no words of his will be raised to Allaah عز وجل. These are the deeds that will be lifted up to Allaah عز وجل, and it is through these deeds that Allaah عز وجل will raise its doer in rank and honor." [79]

g. Optional Prayers Elevate The Status:

Optional prayers raise the status of the worshiper and amplify his supplication.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَالَ ﴿مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ... وَإِنْ سَأَلَنِي لأُعْطِيَنَّهُ، وَلَئِنِ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لأُعِيذَنَّهُ﴾

"Allaah تعالى said: {I will declare war against anyone who shows hostility to a pious worshiper (*Walee*) of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave draws near to Me are what I have made obligatory (*Farḍh*) for him; and My slave persistently approaches Me through additional voluntary acts (*Nawaafil*) until I love him... and if he asks Me something, I will surely give him, and if he seeks My Protection (refuge), I will surely protect him.}" [80]

The optional good deeds bring one closer and closer to Allaah, and they compensate for shortcomings in the obligatory acts of worship. [81] The statement of Allaah تعالى in this *Ḥadeeth*: **{and if he asks Me something, I will surely give him}**, indicates that this devout worshiper of Allaah, who seeks to draw closer to Him سبحانه وتعالى by first fulfilling the

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[79] Tafseer al-Sa`dee (1/685)

[80] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6502)

[81] The three Aḥaadeeth about optional prayers compensating for the shortcomings in the obligatory prayers are mentioned under Chapter (16) of this book.

obligatory duties and then performing voluntary good deeds, Allaah will grant his requests and answer his supplications.

G. What If One Is Not Able To Pray Two Rak`aat?

The two *Rak`aat* before the *Du`aa* are optional. When it is not possible for someone to perform a prayer of two *Rak`aat* for any reason (such as a traveler or in one's menstrual period), that person can still recite *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* even if he has not prayed.

Questioner:
Is it permissible to supplicate with *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* without praying two *Rak`aat* or without performing ablution? Is it permissible for a menstruating or postpartum woman to supplicate with *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*?

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله:
"Yes, seeking guidance through *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is allowed and recommended, even without prayer, because the person is supplicating to his Lord, and seeking guidance from his Lord, whether the person is a woman or a man, whether she is menstruating or not, there is nothing wrong with that. But if the person supplicates after the prayer (*al-Ṣalaah*), then that is better (and recommended).

One supplicates for *al-Istikhaarah* after the prayer, and this is in accordance with the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet ﷺ). The person, whether a man or a woman, offers two *Rak`aat*, then supplicates to his Lord and seeks guidance from Him. But if she is menstruating, or the matter is urgent, and he supplicates for guidance without praying, then there is no problem." [82]

[82] From Shaikh Ibn Baaz's official website. Fatwa No. 17725

Questioner:
The prayer for *al-Istikhaarah* consists of two *Rak`aat*, and we say the supplication narrated from the Prophet ﷺ. However, some people, O Shaikh, supplicate for guidance (*al-Istikhaarah*) without praying. What is your advice?

Shaikh Ṣaaleḥ al-Fawzaan حفظه الله:
"There is nothing wrong with that, because prayer is a Sunnah, and if one abandons it, there is no blame on him. If he limits himself to supplication, there is nothing wrong with that, but it would be less (i.e., lacking). However, if he combines prayer and supplication, then this is more complete and more in accordance with the Sunnah." [83]

Al-Nawawee رحمه الله said:

ولو تعذرت عليه الصلاة استخار بالدعاء

"If he cannot offer the prayer, then he may recite *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*." [84]

Several scholars from different Madhhabs cited these words of al-Nawawee as evidence.

H. The Disapproval Of Imposing Conditions In Worship:

One should worship Allaah upon the Sunnah of His Messenger without stipulating conditions. Worship is servitude, not partnership, and imposing conditions implies bargaining with Allaah, which contradicts the essence of *ʿUboodiyyah* (servitude), and it reflects a lack of sincerity. True worship is unconditional - done for Allaah's pleasure, not depending on worldly outcomes.

[83] From Shaikh al-Fawzaan's official website.
[84] Al-Adhkaar of al-Nawawee (1/120)

Some individuals make their worship conditional, saying: "O Allaah! If You answer my prayers, I will do such-and-such", or "I will pray *Qiyaam al-Layl* if I get what I asked for." This turns worship into a transaction. It is discouraged to impose conditions on Allaah, as this is considered bad manners. The creation has no authority to set conditions on Allaah or to test Him; instead, it is Allaah who tests His creation. One should maintain unwavering devotion in his worship and persistently supplicate to Allaah without attaching conditions, as the Prophet ﷺ stated:

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَسْتَجِيبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ عِنْدَ الشَّدَائِدِ وَالكَرْبِ فَلْيُكْثِرِ الدُّعَاءَ فِي الرَّخَاءِ

"Whoever would be pleased to have Allaah respond to him during hardship and disaster should make much *Du`aa'* in times of ease." [85]

I. Sins Block The Path Of Response:

Persistently sinning without repenting can prevent prayers from being accepted and hinder Allaah's help, which is the opposite of performing good deeds before supplicating. Sins create a barrier between the servant and Allaah, making the heart less receptive and the soul less connected. Persistent sin can lead to a loss of motivation or ability to perform good deeds, including sincere prayers. Supplications may not be answered because the person has not purified himself through repentance.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ اللهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، فَقَالَ: {يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ}. وَقَالَ: {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ}، ثُمَّ

[85] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3382) and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

ذَكَرَ الرَّجُلَ يُطِيلُ السَّفَرَ، أَشْعَثَ أَغْبَرَ يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ،
وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِيَ بِالْحَرَامِ،
فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِكَ

"O People! Indeed, Allaah is Ṭayyib (good/pure). He does not accept anything except that which is pure. Allaah تعالى commands the believers with what He commanded the Messengers. Allaah تعالى said: {O you Messengers! Eat of the good things and act righteously}. And Allaah تعالى also said: {O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided you with…}. Then he ﷺ mentioned (the case of) the man who, having journeyed far, is disheveled and dusty and who stretches out his hands to the sky (saying): "O Lord! O Lord!", (while) his food was unlawful, his drink was unlawful, his clothing was unlawful, and he is nourished with unlawful things, so how can he be answered?" [86]

Yahya Ibn Mu`aadh al-Raazee رحمه الله used to say:

لا تستبطئن الإجابة إذا دعوت وقد سددت طرقها بالذنوب

"The response is not delayed when you supplicate, except for when you have already blocked its path with sins." [87]

[86] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (65-1015). The first Aayah is from Surah al-Mu'minoon (23):51-53; and the second Aayah is from Surah al-Baqarah (2):167-172

[87] Shu`ab al-Imaan al-Baihaqee (1114)

5. "O Allaah! I Ask For Your Guidance"

When the supplicant says:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ

"O Allaah! I ask for Your guidance"

He is seeking Allaah's Guidance. By saying: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي, a person humbles himself and expresses his need for Allaah تعالى, which is the opposite of pride.

The phrase اللَّهُمَّ is among the most sublime ways to start a supplication. The one seeking guidance starts his supplication by saying: اللَّهُمَّ "O Allaah!" He appeals to his Lord through His Divinity, which encompasses worship, as if saying: "You are my إله "*Ilaah*" (You alone I worship), and I am Your servant." There is no closer being than the One true Lord to His sincere, devout, and humble servant. The person begins with this because of the importance of worship and devotion to Allaah; these are the keys to his supplication.

This has broader implications for a Muslim's life; he should prioritize acts of worship above everything else and acknowledge Allaah's Oneness in all his actions and words.

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله said:

فإذا قال السائل: اللهم إني أسألك، كأنه قال: أدعو الله الذي له الأسماء الحسنى والصفات العلى بأسمائه وصفاته

"So when the person says: اللهم إني أسألك "O Allaah! I ask You…" it is as if he is saying: "I call upon Allaah, the One who has the Most

Beautiful Names and the Loftiest Attributes. I beseech Him by all His Names and Attributes.”” [88]

A. Definition Of *Al-Istikhaarah*:

The word *Istikhaarah* (استخارة) comes from the Arabic root *Khair* (خير), meaning “goodness” or “what is best”. *Al-Istikhaarah* linguistically means seeking the good (*Khair*) in a thing, such as seeking direction or helpful suggestions regarding a decision or future course of action. In Islaam, it refers to seeking Allaah’s guidance in choosing the proper course of action in matters such as whether to travel, marry a particular person, enter into a business partnership, or purchase a house or a car, among others.

This is not just a plea to differentiate right from wrong; it is also a request to Allaah تعالى for assistance in applying this knowledge. As **Shaikh al-Sa`dee** رحمه الله defined *al-Hudaa* (guidance) in the *Tafseer* as: **“Beneficial Knowledge and Righteous Deeds.” [89]**

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله described *al-Istikhaarah*, saying:

وَالْمَقْصُودُ أَنَّ الِاسْتِخَارَةَ تَوَكُّلٌ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَتَفْوِيضٌ إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتِقْسَامٌ بِقُدْرَتِهِ وَعِلْمِهِ، وَحُسْنُ اخْتِيَارِهِ لِعَبْدِهِ

“(It is) relying (*Tawakkul*) on Allaah, entrusting one's affairs to Him, and seeking guidance through His Power (*Qudrah*) and Knowledge (*`Ilm*), and (believing) that He تعالى will only choose what is good for His servant.” [90]

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[88] Tafseer al-Qayyim (1/336)
[89] Tafseer al-Sa`dee, Tafseer of Surah al-Kahf (18): 13
[90] Zaad al-Ma`aad (2/519)

13. Being Guided Towards Making *Du`aa* Is Itself A Sign Of Success:

When Allaah inspires a person to perform *al-Istikhaarah*, and he does so, it is the first sign that Allaah desires good (*Khair*) for that individual, and this is the first step towards success.

`Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭaab رضي الله عنه said:

إني لا أحمل هم الإجابة، وإنما أحمل هم الدعاء، فإذا ألهمت الدعاء فإن الإجابة معه

"I am not concerned about the response, but what concerns me is the *Du`aa* (itself). If the *Du`aa* is inspired, then the answer (surely) follows it." [91]

Allaah, in His infinite Mercy and Generosity, guides a person to make *Du`aa*, then teaches him how to make it, then assists him in making it, and then grants him what he has requested. Like how Allaah تعالى taught Aadam عليه السلام the words of repentance and thereafter forgave him. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

{Then Aadam received Words from his Lord. And his Lord pardoned him (accepted his repentance). Verily, He is the One Who forgives (accepts repentance), the Most Merciful} [92]

[91] Iqtiḍhaa al-Ṣiraaṭ al-Mustaqeem (2/706)
[92] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 37

C. The Significance Of Seeking Guidance From Allaah In All Our Affairs:

The statement of the great companion Jaabir Ibn `Abdullaah رضي الله عنهما that the Prophet ﷺ used to teach them the way of doing *al-Istikhaarah* in all matters, just as he taught them a Surah from the Qur'aan, highlights the emphasis that the Prophet ﷺ placed on seeking Allaah's guidance in all our affairs.

Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ﴾

{And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, without guidance from Allaah?} [93]

Who could be more misguided than someone who had the chance to seek guidance from Allaah and seek the straight path that leads to happiness both in this world and the Hereafter, but instead chooses ignorance, depends on his own understanding, and follows his desires? Is there anyone more misguided than such a person?

The significance of this *Du`aa* is also understood from the perspective that the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate to Allaah تعالى for guidance in the night prayers in *Du`aa Qunoot* in *Witr*, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ

"O Allaah, guide me among those whom You have guided." [94]

Moreover, even in the daily prayers, the Believers continually seek Allaah's guidance, particularly in Surah Al-Faatiḥah, where they recite:

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[93] Surah al-A`raf (7): 188

[94] Sunan Ibn Maajah (1178), Sunan Abu Dawood (1425), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (464), and Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1745) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

{Guide us to the straight path} [95]

This plea for guidance is echoed in *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a specific supplication taught by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for seeking Allaah's guidance in making decisions. By engaging in *al-Istikhaarah*, we adhere to a Sunnah and cultivate our trust in Allaah's Supreme Wisdom.

D. Supplicate With Firm Faith And Hope:

When one does good deeds, he should do so with firm Faith and high hopes, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا...

"Whoever Fasts in the month of Ramaḍhaan out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allaah..."

مَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا...

"Whoever stands (in the voluntary prayers during the nights of) Ramaḍhaan out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allaah..."

مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا...

"Whoever spends the night of Lailatul-Qadr in prayer out of sincere Faith and hoping for a reward from Allaah..."

...غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

"...then all his previous sins will be forgiven." [96]

[95] Surah Al-Faatiḥah (1): 6

Similarly, one should call upon Allaah with firm Faith (Yaqeen) that He تعالى will respond to his supplication. In the *Ḥadeeth* of "*Sayyid ul-Istighfaar*", the Prophet ﷺ said:

وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنَ النَّهَارِ مُوقِنًا بِهَا فَمَاتَ مِنْ يَوْمِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُمْسِيَ فَهُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ قَالَهَا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُوَ مُوقِنٌ بِهَا فَمَاتَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُصْبِحَ فَهُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ

"Whoever recites it during the day with firm Faith in it, and dies on the same day before evening, he will be from the people of Paradise; and whoever recites it at night with firm Faith in it, and dies before morning, he will be among the people of Paradise." [97]

The phrase: **"with firm Faith in it"** is repeated twice for a purpose; to remind us that one must be firm, resolute, and determined while asking Allaah, as He تعالى alone is the One Who will answer our prayers.

Ḥudhaifah رضي الله عنه stated:

لَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يَنْجُو فِيهِ إِلَّا مَنْ دَعَا بِدُعَاءِ كَدُعَاءِ الْغَرَقِ

"One should supplicate like a drowning person." [98]

Meaning: To call upon Allaah with the same intensity and wholeheartedness as someone gasping for air, clinging to life. Imagine someone flailing in deep water – he is not distracted, casual, or half-hearted. His plea is raw, focused, and filled with conviction. As Allaah تعالى mentioned many times in the Qur'aan:

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[96] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (35, 37, 38, 1901, 2008, 2009, 2014) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (173-759, 174-759, 175-760)

[97] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6306 & 6323)

[98] Muṣannaf Ibn Abee Shaibah (29173, 37145, 37146) and Shu`ab al-Imaan of al-Baihaqee (1078)

﴿وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُم مَّوْجٌ كَالظُّلَلِ دَعَوُا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ فَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ﴾

{And when a wave covers them like shades (i.e., like clouds or the mountains of sea-water), they invoke Allaah, making their invocations (sincerely) for Him only. But when He brings them safe to land, there are among them those that stop in the middle, between (Belief and disbelief).} [99]

In the hour of need, even the polytheists (*Mushriks*) supplicated sincerely to Allaah alone to remove their distress. So, if the disbelievers (*Kuffaar*) can become sincere and call upon Allaah with determination, then what prevents the Believers from doing the same?

The *Ḥadeeth* also shows that a person shouldn't repeat words like a parrot without understanding or paying attention to what he is saying. This principle applies to all the *Ad`iyaa'* (sing. *Du`aa*, supplications) and the *Adhkaar* (Allaah's remembrance) in the morning and evening.

One should invoke Allaah with certainty (Yaqeen) of being answered, understanding that Allaah does not respond to supplications from the heart of someone who is heedless and distracted by play while praying.

[99] Surah Luqmaan (31): 32. See also Surah al-An`aam (6): 63-64, Surah Yunus (10): 22-23, Surah al-`Ankaboot (29): 65.

6. "By The Virtue Of Your Knowledge"

And when the supplicant says:

بِعِلْمِكَ

"By the virtue of Your knowledge"

The supplicant is affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge.

A. Affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge:

Allaah تعالى possesses perfect knowledge of everything, including the past, present, and future. Nothing occurs in the Heavens and the Earth except that He تعالى is aware of it.

Furthermore, showcasing the completeness of His knowledge, He تعالى has recorded all events that will occur until the Day of Judgment in the Book that is with Him:

﴿وَعِندَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۚ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِن وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

{And with Him are the keys of the *Ghayb* (all that is hidden); no one knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and the sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record.} [100]

[100] Surah al-An`aam (6): 59

ℬ. The Mentioning Of Knowledge Before Power:

In the opening line of this supplication: **"O Allaah! I ask for guidance from Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power"**, knowledge is mentioned before power. This order reflects the Qur'aanic pattern, where Allaah's Beautiful Name *al-`Aleem* (العليم) is mentioned four times before *al-Qadeer* (القدير):

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ﴾

{Truly! Allaah is All-Knowing, All-Powerful} [101]

﴿وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ﴾

{And it is He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful} [102]

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا﴾

{Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Omnipotent} [103]

﴿إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ﴾

{He is the All-Knower and is Able to do all things} [104]

This is why Imaam al-Bukhaaree رحمه الله titled one of the chapters in his Ṣaḥeeḥ as:

باب: العلم قبل القول والعمل

"Chapter: Knowledge comes before speech and action."

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[101] Surah al-Naḥl (16): 70
[102] Surah al-Room (30): 54
[103] Surah Faaṭir (35): 44
[104] Surah al-Shooraa (42): 50

At the start of the supplication, the supplicant is seeking guidance from his Lord. He is beseeching Allaah, through His Knowledge and Wisdom, to guide him to what will benefit him and to grant him the ability to do what he is seeking guidance about. This is why knowledge is mentioned before power.

This serves as a guideline for individuals to understand a matter before engaging with it, and if someone lacks knowledge, he should seek guidance.

7. "And I Appeal To You To Support Me With Your Power"

And when the supplicant says:

وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ

"and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power"

He is acknowledging Allaah's Absolute Power and seeking Allaah's support through it.

A. Seeking Allaah's Help Through Allaah's Beautiful Names And Noble Attributes:

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said: "وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ, meaning: I seek the ability to do it through Your Might. The person is seeking Allaah's *Waseelah* [105] (i.e., a means of seeking nearness to Allaah through one of His Noble Attributes)." [106]

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person seeks the means of drawing closer to Allaah through His Noble Attributes of *`Ilm* (Knowledge) and *Qudrah* (Power). This is because only the One who has complete knowledge of the unseen knows what is best for you, and only the One who is All-Powerful can make it happen for you if it is good and prevent it if it is harmful.

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[105] See Appendix (3) for the permissible types of *Tawassul*

[106] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (10/294)

When the person says: وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ, meaning: “I beseech You, O Allaah, to give me the ability and strength to do the thing that You have chosen for me.”

No one possesses the strength or power to shift from one state to another, nor can anyone govern this transition without the help of Allaah عز وجل. Things become possible only through Allaah’s guidance, consent, and support.

Allaah’s guidance includes instructing him on what to do and how to do it.

Allaah’s permission is seen in facilitating him to do this. Sometimes a person possesses knowledge but lacks the necessary strength, ability, or means to put it into action.

Allaah’s support lies in assisting him to accomplish it.

This is why we see that sometimes a person may deeply desire something and attempt to obtain it, yet he does not receive it; it is because Allaah did not Will it to happen.

This is why it has been prescribed for a person that when he repeats after the *Mu`adhdhin* (caller to prayer), and the *Mu`adhdhin* says: “Come to Prayer, Come to Success”, he should say: “*Laa Ḥawla Wa Laa Quwwata illaa Billaah*”, “There is no might and power except with (the help of) Allaah”.

Meaning: “I am not able to change the state that I am in and go to *al-Ṣalaah* (offer prayer), and I have no strength over it except with the help of Allaah عز وجل.”

⅋. Absolute Power Is Only For Allaah Alone:

His is the absolute power, and to Him belongs all dominion:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

{Certainly, Allaah has power over all things.} [107]

From His absolute power is that He تعالى gives whatever He Wills, to whomever He Wills, and no one can prevent Him سبحانه وتعالى عما يشركون.

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

{Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O Allaah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honor whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are able to do all things.} [108]

Part of the Prophet's ﷺ supplication to Allaah تعالى, after getting up from bowing and after completing the prayers, was:

اللَّهُمَّ لاَ مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَلاَ مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ، وَلاَ يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ

"O Allaah! No one can withhold what You give, and none can give what You withhold, and the fortune of the wealthy is meaningless before You." [109]

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[107] This phrase is repeated throughout the Qur'aan. In Surah al-Baqarah alone, it is repeated 6 times.

[108] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 26

[109] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (844, 6330, 6615, 7292) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (954, 968, 1230, 1234)

The perfection of His dominion is well described in a long *Ḥadeeth Qudsi* that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Allaah تعالى said:**

﴿يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَبْلُغُوا ضَرِّي فَتَضُرُّونِي وَلَنْ تَبْلُغُوا نَفْعِي فَتَنْفَعُونِي يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَتْقَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ قَامُوا فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ فَسَأَلُونِي فَأَعْطَيْتُ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ مَسْأَلَتَهُ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا عِنْدِي إِلاَّ كَمَا يَنْقُصُ الْمِخْيَطُ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ الْبَحْرَ﴾

{O My servants, you can neither do Me harm nor do Me any benefit. O My servants, even if the first amongst you, the last amongst you, and even the whole of the human race of yours, and that of Jinn even, become (equally) God-conscious like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing would add to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of the Jinn too in unison become the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it would cause no loss to My Power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of Jinn also all stand in one plain ground, and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it would not in any way, cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping the needle in it.}" [110]

The only One who can truly help is Allaah, the One Who owns everything, Who has power over all creation, Who fears no consequences, Whose actions are not questioned, and Whose

[110] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (6246)

treasures never diminish. No one can withhold what He تعالى gives, and no one can give what He تعالى withholds.

C. Supplicating To Anyone Other Than Allaah Is Shirk:

The fundamental cause of *Shirk* is the belief that there are gods besides Allaah, or that there are beings equal to Allaah in power and strength, or that they share in His sovereignty, believing they can grant what Allaah تعالى withholds.

Therefore, anyone who seeks help from idols, the deceased in graves, or saints is committing *Shirk* by associating partners with Allaah in worship.

As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِن قِطْمِيرٍ * إِن تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ﴾

{He merges the night into the day, and He merges the day into the night. And He has subjected the sun and the moon, each runs its course for a term appointed. Such is Allaah your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those whom you invoke (or call upon) instead of Him, do not own even a Qiṭmeer (husk of a date-stone). If you invoke them, they do not hear your call; and if (in case) they were to hear, they could not grant it to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they

will disown your worship of them. And no one can inform you like Him Who is the All-Knower.} [111]

Allaah تعالى also said:

﴿وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلْ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَاشِفَاتُ ضُرِّهِ أَوْ أَرَادَنِي بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَاتُ رَحْمَتِهِ قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ﴾

{And verily, if you ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth" Surely, they will say: "Allaah." Say: "Tell me then, the things that you invoke besides Allaah - if Allaah intended some harm for me, could they remove His harm or if He intended some mercy for me, could they withhold His mercy" Say: "Sufficient for me is Allaah; in Him those who trust must put their trust."} [112]

He تعالى also said:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَعْصِمُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا﴾

{Say: "Who is he who can protect you from Allaah if He intends to harm you or intends mercy on you" And they will not find, besides Allaah, for themselves any protector or any helper.} [113]

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[111] Surah Faaṭir (35): 13-14
[112] Surah al-Zumar (39): 38
[113] Surah Al-Aḥzaab (33): 17

`Abdullaah bin `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما narrated: One day, I was behind the Prophet, and he ﷺ said to me:

يَا غُلَامُ إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الأُمَّةَ لَوْ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ، وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ،

رُفِعَتِ الأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتْ الصُّحُفُ

"O young man! I shall teach you some words (of advice): Be mindful of Allaah, and Allaah will protect you. Be mindful of Allaah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask Allaah (alone); and if you seek help, seek help from Allaah (alone). And know that if the Ummah (nation) were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allaah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allaah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted, and the pages have dried." [114]

Allaah's right upon his creation is that they should worship him alone. One of the ways of worship is to supplicate to Allaah alone for our needs. Supplicating to anything other than Allaah is *Shirk*. Asking anyone other than Allaah is *Shirk*, and asking through the *Waseelah* of a dead man is not from the Sunnah (teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ).

[114] Sunan al-Tirmidhee, *Ḥadeeth* (2516), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh Al-Albaanee

8. "And I Ask You For Your Great Blessings"

And when the supplicant says:

وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ العَظِيمِ

"and I ask You for Your great blessings"

He is asking Allaah تعالى to provide him out of His Great Blessings. This phrase in the supplication is an expression of humility, hope, and trust in Allaah's kindness.

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:
"(When the supplicant says): **"and I ask You for Your great blessings"**, this is a position where a person shows his need and humility to Allaah تعالى." [115]

A. Beseeching Allaah through His Grace (Faḍhl):

Beseeching Allaah through His Grace (*Faḍhl*) opens the doors to abundant blessings and takes care of a person's needs and worries. This is also mentioned in another *Ḥadeeth*.

**`Alee** رضي الله عنه narrated that a *Mukaatab* [116] came to him and said: "Indeed, I am not capable of my *Kitaabah*, [117] so help me." He (`Alee) said: "Should I not teach you words that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ

[115] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (8/244)
[116] *Mukaatab*. i.e., referring to a slave who has an agreement (*Kitaabah*) with his master to buy his freedom, where the slave agrees to pay a specified amount of money to the master. See Tuḥfatul Aḥwadhee.
[117] The *Kitaabah* is the agreement for an amount of money as a price for the slave's freedom. Although the word *Kitaabah* means written but some of these contracts used to be verbal.

taught me? If you had a debt upon you similar to the mountain of *Ṣeer*, [118] Allaah would pay it on your behalf." He (`Alee) said: "Say:

اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِي بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ، وَأَغْنِنِي بِفَضْلِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ

Allaahummak-finee biḥalaalika `an ḥaraamika, wa aghninee bi faḍhlika `amman siwaak

O Allaah, suffice me with Your lawful against Your prohibited, and make me, by Your Grace, independent of all others besides You." [119]

This narration, from `Alee رضي الله عنه, is a comprehensive *Du`aa* and is similar to *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* in meaning, in which a person is invoking Allaah, beseeching Him through His grace (*Faḍhl*), seeking sufficiency through lawful means, and relying on Allaah's Decisions. By Allaah's permission, this will be further explained under Chapter (21): "And Make Me Pleased With It."

ß. Allaah Is The Owner Of Great Bounties:

a. Allaah تعالى praised Himself repeatedly in the Qur'aan with the following phrase:

﴿وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

{And Allaah is the Owner of Great Bounty} [120]

b. Allaah تعالى not only owns great bounties, but He تعالى also bestows them upon His creation:

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[118] *Ṣeer* (also known as *Ṣabeer* and *Ṣibr*) is among the highest mountains in Yemen and Arabian Peninsula.

[119] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3563) and graded as "*Ḥasan*" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (266)

[120] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 105; Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 74; Surah al-Anfaal (8): 29; Surah al-Ḥadeed (57): 21 & 29; Surah al-Jum`ah (62): 4

﴿ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

{That is the bounty of Allaah, which He gives to whom He wills, and Allaah is the possessor of Great Bounty} [121]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ يَمِينَ اللهِ مَلْأَى لَا يَغِيضُهَا نَفَقَةٌ، سَحَّاءُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ، أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْفَقَ مُنْذُ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَنْقُصْ مَا فِي يَمِينِهِ، وَعَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ، وَبِيَدِهِ الْأُخْرَى الْقَبْضُ، أَوِ الْقَبْضُ، يَرْفَعُ وَيَخْفِضُ

"The Right (Hand) of Allaah is full, and (its fullness) is not affected by the continuous spending night and day. Do you see what He has spent since He created the Heavens and the Earth? Yet all that has not decreased what is in His Right Hand. His Throne is over the water, and in His other Hand is the Bounty or the Power to bring about death, [in another narration, it is: "and in His other Hand is the balance (of Justice)"], and He elevates and degrades (whom He likes)." [122]

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Allaah تعالى said:

﴿يَا عِبَادِي لَوْ أَنَّ أَوَّلَكُمْ وَآخِرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ قَامُوا فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ فَسَأَلُونِي فَأَعْطَيْتُ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ مَسْأَلَتَهُ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا عِنْدِي إِلَّا كَمَا يَنْقُصُ الْمِخْيَطُ إِذَا أُدْخِلَ الْبَحْرَ﴾

{…O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of Jinn also all stand in one plain ground and you ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it would not in any way, cause any loss to Me (even

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[121] Surah al-Ḥadeed (57): 21 & 29; Surah al-Jum`ah (62): 4

[122] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7411, 7419) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (37-993)

less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping the needle in it.}" [123]

c. It is from the Generosity of Allaah that He تعالى permitted us to seek from His bounties:

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ﴾

{There is no blame upon you for seeking bounty from your Lord} [124]

﴿وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِ﴾

{And ask Allaah of His Bounty} [125]

Among Allaah's blessings and bounties is His revelation of the Books and sending of Messengers for our guidance. He تعالى also postpones our punishment or forgives our sins when we sincerely repent and seek His forgiveness.

If it hadn't been for Allaah's grace and favor upon the Believers, they would have been among the losers, [126] they would have followed the Shaiṭaan, [127] a great torment would have afflicted them [128], and they would not have been cleansed of their sins. [129]

Also, the air people breathe, the food they eat, the Sun, the Moon, their parents, their children, and their very existence are among the great blessings of Allaah. Whatever Allaah تعالى has bestowed upon His creation, whether big or small, is a favor and blessing from Him. No

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[123] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (6246)
[124] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 198
[125] Surah al-Nisaa (4): 32
[126] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 64
[127] Surah al-Nisaa (4): 83
[128] Surah al-Noor (24): 14
[129] Surah al-Noor (24): 21

one has any right upon Allaah to demand these favors. It is Allaah Who grants His slave out of kindness and generosity. As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ﴾

{And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allaah} [130]

Whenever a person acknowledges Allaah's favors and blessings, this protects the heart from arrogance and claiming self-righteousness.

C. Allaah's Blessings Upon His Creation Are Innumerable:

Allaah تعالى has provided us with so many blessings in this world that we can never deny:

﴿فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ﴾

{Then, which of the favors of your Lord will you deny?} [131]

Allaah تعالى has provided us with so many blessings in this world that we cannot enumerate:

﴿وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا﴾

{And if you count the Blessings of Allaah, never will you be able to count them.} [132]

When Allaah تعالى bestows grace upon His slaves, He تعالى wants to test them to see if they are grateful or ungrateful:

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[130] Surah al-Naḥl (16): 53
[131] 31 times in Surah al-Raḥmaan (55)
[132] Surah Ibraaheem (14): 34 and al-Naḥl (16):18

﴿قَالَ هَٰذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۖ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ﴾

{He (Sulaimaan عليه السلام) said: "This is from the favor of my Lord to test me whether I will be grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his ownself, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his ownself). Certainly! My Lord is Rich (Free of all wants), Bountiful."} [133]

And He تعالى promises to give His slaves more if they ask and thank Him:

﴿وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ﴾

{And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: "If you give thanks, I will provide you with more (of My Blessings)} [134]

Yet, the majority of humanity is ungrateful to Allaah:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ﴾

{Truly, Allaah is full of Bounty to mankind, but most of the people do not give thanks.} [135]

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[133] Surah al-Naml (27): 40

[134] Surah Ibraaheem (14): 7

[135] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 243; Surah Yunus (10): 60; Surah Yusuf (12): 38; Surah al-Naml (27): 73; Surah Ghaafir (40): 61

D. The Bounties Of Our Lord That We Should Invoke Him For Include:

There are many things to supplicate for, among the greatest bounties we should supplicate for are:

a. Obedience To His Book And His Messenger's ﷺ Sunnah:

﴿وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا * ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا﴾

{And whoso obeys Allaah and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allaah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon, the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are! Such is the Bounty from Allaah, and Allaah is Sufficient as All-Knower.} [136]

b. Recitation Of The Qur'aan, Its Understanding, And Ability To Implement It:

﴿ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ﴾

{Then, We gave the Book (the Qur'aan) for inheritance to such of Our slaves as We chose (the followers of Muhammad ﷺ). Then of them are some who wrong their own-selves, and of them are some who follow a middle course, and of them are some who, by Allaah's Leave,

[136] Surah al-Nisaa' (4):70

are foremost in good deeds. That (inheritance of the Qur'aan) is indeed a great grace.} [137]

c. Seeking Jannatul-Firdous:

As Allaah تعالى stated:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي رَوْضَاتِ الْجَنَّاتِ ۖ لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ﴾

{As for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah) and do righteous deeds (will be) in the flowering meadows of the Gardens (Paradise), having what they wish from their Lord. That is the supreme Grace (Paradise).} [138]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ فِي الجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ، أَعَدَّهَا اللَّهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ، فَاسْأَلُوهُ الفِرْدَوْسَ، فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الجَنَّةِ – فَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الجَنَّةِ

"Paradise has one hundred grades which Allaah has reserved for the Mujaahideen who fight in His Cause, and the distance between each of the two grades is like the distance between Heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allaah (for something), ask for *al-Firdous*, for it is the best and highest part of Paradise. Above it is the Throne of the Beneficent (i.e., Allaah), and the rivers of Paradise originate from it." [139]

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[137] Surah Faaṭir (35): 32
[138] Surah al-Shooraa (42): 22
[139] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (2790, 7423)

E. Divine Favor, Not Entitlement:

When the supplicant says: وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ (**"and I ask You for Your great blessings"**), this shows that everything Allaah تعالى gives to His servant is purely a favor from Allaah and not a right that a servant has earned. Instead, it is due to the perfection of His grace, سبحانه وتعالى.

All blessings are purely gifts from Allaah, and the servant has no inherent claim over Divine generosity. This perspective highlights the following key ideas:

a. Divine Generosity (*Faḍhl*):

It emphasizes Allaah's boundless generosity and benevolence. His blessings are not limited by human deeds but are given out of His own perfection and grace.

Allaah gives abundantly, generously, and without measure to whomever He تعالى wills, not because of who we are, but because of who He is: ***al-Raḥmaan***, ***al-Kareem***, ***al-Wahhaab***.

b. Humility:

Through this supplication, a person humbles himself and approaches Allaah with humility. He recognizes his own limitations and that all good things come directly from Allaah's favor, preventing feelings of entitlement or arrogance. So, the servant approaches Allaah not with demands, but with hope and reverence. And this is the essence of every supplication.

c. Gratitude:

By acknowledging that blessings are a favor rather than a right, a person is more likely to be grateful for everything he receives, whether it's health, wealth, or Faith.

F. Perfection Of Divine Grace:

The adjective العظيم (***al-`Aẓheem***), "great" or "magnificent", points to:

a. The vastness and limitlessness of Allaah's bounty.
b. The majesty of His giving, which is not constrained by human merit or logic.

G. Practical Reflection:

Whenever a person says this phrase: وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ العَظِيمِ (**"and I ask You for Your great blessings"**), he should remind himself: "I am not worthy because of my actions, I am hopeful only because of His Mercy and Grace (*Faḍhl*)." This aligns with the Prophet's ﷺ own words.

`Aaishah and Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنهما narrated that Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

لَنْ يُدْخِلَ أَحَدًا عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ

"The good deeds of any person will not make him enter Paradise." (i.e., none can enter Paradise through his good deeds alone.) They (the Prophet's companions) said: "Not even you, O Allaah's Messenger ﷺ?" He ﷺ said:

لَا، وَلَا أَنَا، إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَغَمَّدَنِي اللهُ بِفَضْلٍ وَرَحْمَةٍ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا

"Not even myself, unless Allaah bestows His Favor and Mercy on me. So be moderate in your religious duties and do the deeds that are within your ability…" [140]

[140] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (5673, 6464, 6467) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (75-2816, 76-2816)

In another narration, he ﷺ said:

لَنْ يُنَجِّيَ أَحَدًا مِنْكُمْ عَمَلُهُ

"The deeds of any one of you will not save you (from the Hell Fire)." (i.e., none among you can attain salvation purely because of his deeds). They said: "Even you (will not be saved by your deeds), O Allaah's Messenger ﷺ?" He ﷺ said:

وَلاَ أَنَا، إِلاَّ أَنْ يَتَغَمَّدَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا

"No, even I (will not be saved) unless and until Allaah bestows His Mercy on me. Therefore, do good deeds properly, sincerely, and moderately…" [141]

Jaabir رضي الله عنه **reported**: I heard Allaah's Messenger ﷺ as saying:

لاَ يُدْخِلُ أَحَدًا مِنْكُمْ عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَلاَ يُجِيرُهُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلاَ أَنَا إِلاَّ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ

"None of you would get into Paradise because of his good deeds alone, and he would not be rescued from Fire, not even I, but because of the Mercy of Allaah." [142]

We are not entitled to anything. Whatever Allaah bestows upon us is from His *Faḍhl* (Favor, Grace, Blessing) and *Raḥmah* (Mercy). Don't get carried away by your good deeds, because no matter how much we praise Allaah, it will always fall short, and our good deeds will always be deficient. [143] Our good deeds alone are not sufficient to help us

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[141] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6463) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (71-2816, 73-2816, 74-2816)

[142] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (77-2817)

[143] A lot of people are content with the small amount of worship they perform, yet on the Day of Judgment, there will be Angels who will be saying:

سبحانَكَ! ما عبدناك حَقَّ عبادتِكَ

"O Allaah! We did not worship You as You ought to have been worshiped."

Salmaan al-Faarisee رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: **"The Scale will be placed on the Day of Judgment (for all to see) and were the heavens and**

enter *al-Jannah* (Paradise) or save us from the punishment of Hellfire. But for our good deeds, Allaah will reward us generously, and through them He will determine the ranks we will occupy in *al-Jannah*. So,

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the earth were (to be placed on it) to be weighed, it would still be spacious. The Angels will say: 'O our Lord! Who will be weighed on this?' Allaah تعالى will say: {Whoever I wish from My creation}. The Angels will exclaim: 'Glory be to You (O Allaah)! We have not worshiped You as You ought to have been worshiped.' The Şiraat (Bridge) will be placed (across Hell) like the barrier of Moosaa (عليه السلام), the Angels will say: 'Who will be permitted to go across this (successfully)?' Allaah تعالى will say: {Whoever I wish from My creation}. The Angels will exclaim: 'Glory be to You (O Allaah)! We have not worshiped You as You ought to have been worshiped.'"
[Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim, and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (941)]

And if ever one gets amazed at his good deeds and acts of worship, and starts feeling proud that he has fulfilled his duty, then remember that the best of creation (the Prophet ﷺ), in the best part (the last-third) of the night, in the best position (i.e., prostration), while doing the best act of worship (i.e., *al-Ṣalaah*), supplicated saying:

لَا أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

"I cannot offer You the praise You deserve; indeed, You are as the way You have praised Yourself."

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that 'Aaishah رضي الله عنها said: "I noticed the Prophet ﷺ was not there in the bed one night, so I started looking for him (at the spot where he prays) and my hand touched his feet and they were held upright, and he was prostrating and saying:

اللهُمَّ أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سَخَطِكَ، وَبِمُعَافَاتِكَ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِكَ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ لَا أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

Allaahumma a`oodhu bi-ridhaaka min sakhatik, wa bi-muaafaatika min uqoobatik, wa aoodhu bika mink; laa uHsee thanaa'an alaik, anta kamaa athnaita alaa nafsik.

"O Allaah! Indeed, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your wrath, in Your protection from Your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot offer You the praise You deserve; indeed, You are as the way You have praised Yourself."
[Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (986). It is also narrated from `Alee Ibn Abee Taalib رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ used to say this at the end of Witr. Sunan Abu Dawood (1427), Sunan al-Tirmidhee, Sunan al-Nasaa'ee, and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee]

when you supplicate, raise your expectations but be humble; and when you do good deeds, be sincere, moderate, and constant.

9. "You Are Capable"

And when the supplicant says:

فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ

"You are capable"

He is acknowledging Allaah's Ability to do all things that befit His Majesty. As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾

{Say: "He has the power to send upon you…} [144]

The harmony of the universe, the complexity of life, and the balance in nature all point to Allaah's absolute Power and Wisdom as the Creator.

A. From The Treasures Of Jannah:

Acknowledging that all power and might belong to Allaah is from the treasures of Jannah.

Abu Moosa al-Ash`aree رضي الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allaah said to me:

أَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى كَلِمَةٍ هِيَ كَنْزٌ مِنْ كُنُوزِ الْجَنَّةِ؟

"Shall I not guide you to a word that is a treasure from the treasures of Jannah?"

I (Abu Moosa) said: "Yes!" He ﷺ replied:

[144] Surah al-An`aam (6): 65

قُلْ: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ؛ فَإِنَّهَا كَنْزٌ مِنْ كُنُوزِ الْجَنَّةِ

"(Frequently) say: *Laa Ḥawla Wa Laa Quwwata illaa Billaah* (There is no power and no might except by Allaah) for it is a treasure from the treasures of Paradise." [145]

ß. What Does It Mean To Affirm That All Power Belongs To Allaah?

By affirming absolute power to Allaah, a supplicant is acknowledging two things:

a. That He تعالى alone is the Owner and Master of all the Bounties and the Creator of all things:

﴿وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

{And Allaah is the Owner of Great Bounty} [146]

b. That when He تعالى wants to decree a matter, all He says is "*Kun,*" and it comes into existence:

﴿إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَن نَّقُولَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ﴾

{Verily! Our Word unto a thing when We intend it, is only that We say unto it: "Kun" (Be!) and it is} [147]

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[145] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (4205, 6384, 6409) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (44-2704, 45-2704, 47-2704). It is also reported from Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه in Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3601), and from Ḥaazim Ibn Ḥarmalah رضي الله عنه in Sunan Ibn Maajah (3826) with the wording:

أَكْثِرْ مِنْ قَوْلِ: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ كَنْزِ الْجَنَّةِ

"Frequently say: 'There is no power and no might except through Allaah,' for it is part of the treasure of paradise."

[146] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 105 – and this phrase is repeated throughout the Qur'aan

[147] Surah al-Naḥl (16): 40

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ﴾

{Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it: "Kun" (Be!) and it is!} [148]

These Aayaat highlight that Allaah's Will is executed instantly and effortlessly, underscoring His unmatched authority.

Our Lord is He who never sleeps or slumbers, never needs rest or feels tired, and He تعالى does not forget.

C. Another Qur'aanic Pattern:

As previously mentioned, [149] at the beginning of the supplication, Knowledge is mentioned before Power, and here, Power and Ability are mentioned before Knowledge: **"You are capable, and I am not; You know, and I do not."** This order reflects another Qur'aanic pattern, where Allaah تعالى mentioned His Power before His Knowledge:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾

{It is Allaah Who has created seven Heavens and of the Earth the like thereof (i.e., seven). His Command descends between them (Heavens and Earth), that you may know that Allaah has power over all things, and that Allaah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge.} [150]

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[148] Surah Yaaseen (36): 82
[149] See Chapter (6) of this book
[150] Surah al-Talaaq (65): 12

This serves to reiterate, with considerable emphasis, that all of Allaah's decisions, decrees, and ordainments are based on His infinite Knowledge and profound Wisdom, as Allaah تعالى explicitly stated on three different occasions in the Qur'aan:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ﴾

{That is the ordaining of the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing} [151]

D. The Significance Of Worship After Affirming Absolute Power To Allaah:

Affirming Allaah's power is not sufficient unless it leads to exclusive worship of Him. The Qur'aan condemns those who affirm Allaah's Lordship but associate partners in worship (e.g., idols as intercessors, etc.).

The *Mushriks* (polytheists) did not deny the existence of a Creator. They acknowledged that Allaah is their Lord, the One who created the sun and the moon, and the heavens and the earth belong to Him. They also acknowledged that He sends rain from the sky and gives life to the dead land. It was only when they were asked to single out Allaah in worship that they refused.

So, affirming Allaah's Lordship alone is not enough for safety from polytheism and salvation from the Hellfire. True safety requires sincerely worshiping Allaah alone, without associating partners with Him, سبحانه وتعالى عما يشركون.

[151] Surah al-An`aam (6): 96; Surah Yaaseen (36): 38; Surah Fuṣṣilat (41): 12

10. "And I Am Unable To"

And when the supplicant says:

وَلاَ أَقْدِرُ

"and I am unable to"

He is acknowledging his inability and helplessness.

The phrase: **"and I am unable to"** conforms with the Qur'aan, where Allaah تعالى instructed His Messenger ﷺ to declare to the people that he ﷺ does not hold power to harm or benefit himself. The source of all strength is from Allaah:

﴿قُل لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ﴾

{Say (O Muhammad): "I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allaah has willed.} [152]

A. Similar To The *Du`aa* Of The One In Distress:

When the person supplicates, saying: **"O Allaah! You are capable, and I am not,"** it signifies complete submission. The *Ḥadeeth* indicates that the servant cannot do without Allaah's assistance even for the blink of an eye. This is why the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate to Allaah to take complete charge of his affairs.

Abu Bakrah Nafee` Ibn al-Haarith رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said: **"The supplication of the one in distress is:**

[152] Surah al-A`raf (7): 188

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو، فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

Allaahumma raḥmataka arjoo, falaa takilnee ilaa nafsee ṭarfata `ain, wa aṣliḥlee sha'nee kullaahu, laa ilaaha illaa anta.

O Allaah, it is Your mercy that I hope for, so do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye, and rectify for me all of my affairs. None has the right to be worshiped except You." [153]

In another incident, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said to (his daughter) Faaṭimah رضي الله عنها: **"What prevents you from (following) the instructions I gave you? You should say in the morning and the evening:**

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيثُ، أَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ، وَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

Yaa Ḥayyu yaa Qayyoom, bi-raḥmatika astagheeth, aṣliḥlee sha'nee kullaahu, walaa takilnee ilaa nafsee ṭarfata `ain

O Ever-Living One, O Eternal One! Through Your Mercy I seek relief. Rectify for me all of my affairs, and do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye." [154]

13. The Weak State Of Human Beings:

Allaah تعالى mentioned Man's creation, saying:

﴿وَخُلِقَ الْإِنسَانُ ضَعِيفًا﴾

{And man was created weak} [155]

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[153] This is part of the *Ḥadeeth* reported in Sunan Abu Dawood (5090) and Adab al-Mufrad (701) of Imaam al-Bukhaaree, and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[154] Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim (2000), al-Nasaa'ee in al-Kubraa (10330) and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami` (5820) and al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (227)

Allaah تعالى also said:

﴿اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِن بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِن بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ﴾

{Allaah is He Who created you in (a state of) weakness, then gave you strength after weakness, then, after strength, gave (you) weakness and grey hair. He creates what He wills. And it is He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful (i.e., able to do all things).} [156]

Human beings possess abilities, but these abilities are limited in scope. Human beings possess remarkable abilities, including reasoning, creativity, empathy, and adaptability; however, these abilities are bounded by biological, psychological, and environmental limits. For example:

a. Cognitive Limits:
Humans can't process infinite amounts of information or remember everything they see.

b. Physical Limits:
Human bodies can only withstand a certain amount of stress, speed, or exertion.

c. Temporal Limits:
Humans have a limited lifespan, restricting what they can learn or accomplish within a lifetime.

d. Perceptual Limits:
Human perception, including vision and hearing, is limited to a specific range of frequencies.

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[155] Surah al-Nisaa (4): 28
[156] Surah al-Room (30): 54

e. Spiritual Limits:

Weaknesses in humans can manifest in various forms, including physical limitations, wavering willpower, limited determination, lapses in *Imaan* (Faith), and insufficient patience, among others.

In the long *Ḥadeeth* of *al-Israa'* and *al-Mi`raaj*, regarding the fifty prayers, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned about his meeting with Moosa عليه السلام:

ثُمَّ احْتَبَسَهُ مُوسَى عِنْدَ الْخَمْسِ فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ رَاوَدْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ قَوْمِي عَلَى أَدْنَى مِنْ هَذَا فَضَعُفُوا فَتَرَكُوهُ فَأُمَّتُكَ أَضْعَفُ أَجْسَادًا وَقُلُوبًا وَأَبْدَانًا وَأَبْصَارًا وَأَسْمَاعًا، فَارْجِعْ فَلْيُخَفِّفْ عَنْكَ رَبُّكَ

"Then Moosa stopped him when the prayers had been reduced to five and said: 'O Muhammad! By Allaah, I tried to persuade my nation, Banee Israa'eel, to do less than this, but they could not do it and gave it up. However, your followers are weaker in body, heart, sight, and hearing, so return to your Lord so that He may lighten your burden.'" [157]

C. One Cannot Succeed Without Allaah's Support:

Nooh عليه السلام pleaded with his son to accept Islaam and board the ship; however, he was unable to convince him. Ibraaheem عليه السلام pleaded with his father to accept Islaam, but he could not persuade him. The Prophet ﷺ pleaded with Abu Ṭaalib to accept Islaam, but Abu Ṭaalib chose the other path. On the Day of Judgment, some Prophets will have one or two followers, and some not even one. [158] This does not

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[157] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7517)

[158] **Ibn `Abbaas** رضي الله عنهما narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

imply that these Messengers of Allaah عليهم الصلاة والسلام failed in their mission; instead, it serves as a reminder that nothing is achievable without Allaah's help, as Allaah تعالى said:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ﴾

{Verily! (O Muhammad ﷺ), you do not guide whom you like, but Allaah guides whom He wills.} [159]

And when a Jewish boy accepted Islaam, the Prophet ﷺ praised Allaah, saying:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْقَذَهُ بِي مِنَ النَّارِ

"Praise be to Allaah Who has saved him through me from Hell." [160]

And the Prophet ﷺ said to `Alee رضي الله عنه:

فَوَاللَّهِ؛ لَأَنْ يَهْدِيَ اللَّهُ بِكَ رَجُلًا، خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَكَ حُمْرُ النَّعَمِ

عُرِضَتْ عَلَيَّ الأُمَمُ، فَجَعَلَ يَمُرُّ النَّبِيُّ مَعَهُ الرَّجُلُ، وَالنَّبِيُّ مَعَهُ الرَّجُلَانِ، وَالنَّبِيُّ مَعَهُ الرَّهْطُ، وَالنَّبِيُّ لَيْسَ مَعَهُ أَحَدٌ

"Some nations were displayed before me. A prophet passed in front of me with one man, and another with two men, and another with a group of people, and another with nobody with him…" [Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (5705, 5752, 6541) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (372-220)]

[159] Surah al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 56

[160] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1356), and the wording is from Sunan Abu Dawood (3095) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The *Ḥadeeth* is as follows:

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated: A young Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet ﷺ, and he became sick. So the Prophet ﷺ went to visit him. He sat near his head and asked him to embrace Islaam. The boy looked at his father, who was sitting there; the latter told him to obey Abu al-Qaasim (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ), and the boy embraced Islaam. The Prophet ﷺ came out saying: **"All praise be to Allaah Who saved the boy from the Hell-fire."**

"By Allaah, if Allaah guides a single person through you, it will be better for you than (a great number of) red camels." [161]

The Prophet and Messenger عليهم السلام preached the religion to the people, but the final decision is with Allaah.

D. Even As A Group, You Will Only Accomplish What Allaah Permits You To Do:

Sometimes, people take pride in the strength of numbers, whether it's the size of a group, the number of followers, an army, supporters, or even wealth and resources. This pride can stem from a feeling of security, power, or influence that numbers seem to offer. So when people say: "We have the numbers," or "We stand strong together," it's essential to remember that even as a group, you will only accomplish what Allaah تعالى allows you to.

﴿لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۙ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ ۙ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنكُمْ شَيْئًا وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم مُّدْبِرِينَ﴾

{Allaah has already given you victory in many regions and [even] on the day of Ḥunain, when you rejoiced at your great number, but it did not avail you at all, and the earth, as spacious as it is, was narrowed for you; then you turned back, fleeing.} [162]

The battle of Ḥunain happened soon after the conquest of Makkah. Despite having large numbers, the Believers initially faced defeat because some who had recently accepted Islaam felt overconfident.

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[161] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3009, 3701, 4210) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (34-2406)
[162] Surah al-Tawbah (9): 25

This was a Divine lesson to teach them that victory comes from Allaah alone. [163]

No matter how united, organized, or numerous a group may be, they can only achieve what Allaah allows, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الأُمَّةَ لَوْ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ، وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ

"And know that if the Ummah (nation) were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allaah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allaah had already prescribed against you." [164]

With Allaah's support, smaller groups have often defeated larger ones, as mentioned by Allaah تعالى in the Qur'aan:

﴿كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

{How many a small group has defeated a large group by Allaah's Will. And Allaah is with those who are patient} [165]

E. Things That Guarantee Swift Response To *Du`aa*:

Furthermore, when a supplicant begins his supplication by praising Allaah, affirming His perfection, acknowledging His Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes, and recognizing his own shortcomings, weaknesses, and inability without Allaah's help - along with raised

[163] See Tafseer Ibn Katheer for a more detailed explanation.
[164] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2516) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee
[165] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 249

hands and an attentive heart [166] - all of these actions contribute to a swift response to the supplication.

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[166] An attentive heart is such an essential part of `*Ibaadah* (worship), but a lot of us face the problem of having an inattentive heart. Our bodies will be in the *Masjid*, our tongues will be speaking the words, but our hearts will be wandering around.
Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

ادْعُوا اللهَ وَأَنْتُمْ مُوقِنُونَ بالإجابةِ، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللهَ لا يَسْتجيبُ دُعاءً من قَلْبٍ غافلٍ لاهٍ

"Supplicate to Allaah while being certain of being answered, and know that Allaah does not respond to a supplication which comes from a careless and inattentive heart."
[Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3749) and graded as "Ḥasan li Ghairihee" (authentic due to corroborating chains) by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (594). Note: Even though Shaikh al-Albaanee authenticated this *Ḥadeeth*, there are other scholars who graded it as "Ḍha'eef". One of its narrators is Ṣaaleḥ al-Murree, who is very weak in *Ḥadeeth*. Al-Bukhaaree said about him: "Munkar al-*Ḥadeeth*" (i.e., very weak in *Ḥadeeth*). Ibn Ma`een and al-Daraquṭnee said: "He is weak". Abu Dawood and al-Nasaa'ee abandoned his *Ḥadeeth*.]
`Abdullaah ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه said:

إن الله لا يقبل إلا الناخلة من الدعاء، ولا يسمع من مسمع ولا من مراء ولا من داع إلا دعاء يثبت قلبه

"Allaah تعالى **does not accept the *Du`aa* except those that are done sincerely (and with devotion). Allaah** تعالى **does not accept those *Du`aa* that are done for making the people hear it, or for showing off, or done playfully, or inattentively, except those that are done with a firm heart."** [Shu`ab al-Imaan (1096)]
`Abdul-Raḥmaan Ibn Yazeed** reported that al-Rabee` used to visit `Alqamah every Friday. Whenever I was absent, they would send for me. On one occasion, al-Rabee` came when I was not there. Later, `Alqamah approached me and asked if I had heard what al-Rabee` mentioned. He (al-Rabee`) said: **"Do you not notice how often people make supplications and how rarely they are answered? This is because Allaah** عز وجل **accepts only the heartfelt supplication."** I asked: Didn't `Abdullaah (Ibn Mas`ood) say that? `Alqamah asked: What did he say? I replied: `Abdullaah (Ibn Mas`ood) said: **"Allaah تعالى **does not heed the requests of those who wish for others to hear (their supplications), or those who show off, or those who play (around and are not serious). He listens only to the sincere supplications of those who earnestly call out from their heart."** [Adab al-Mufrad (606) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee]

a. Start With Praising Allaah:

Praising Allaah, beseeching Him with the kindest of words, negating from Him every type of imperfection and weakness, and affirming His Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: I was sitting with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, and a man was standing in prayer. He then bowed, prostrated, recited the *Tashah-hud*, and supplicated:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ [وَحْدَكَ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ] الْمَنَّانُ بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ يَا ذَا الْجَلاَلِ وَالإِكْرَامِ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ...

"Allaahumma innee as-aluka bi-anna lakal-hamd, laa ilaaha illaa ant, [wahdaka laa shareeka lak], al-mannaan, badee`us-samaawaati wal-ardh, yaa dhal-jalaali wal-ikraam! Ya hayyu ya qayyoom! Inni as-aluka…"

(O Allaah, indeed I ask You since all praise is due to You, there is none worthy of worship but You, [and You have no partner or associate] the Bestower, the Originator of the heavens and earth, O Possessor of Majesty and Honor, O Ever-living, O-Eternal, I ask of You…)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

تَدْرُونَ بِمَا دَعَا؟

"Do you know what he has supplicated with?"

They said: "Allaah and His Messenger know best." He ﷺ said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَقَدْ دَعَا اللهَ بِاسْمِهِ الْعَظِيمِ، الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، وَإِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ أَعْطَى

"By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he called upon Allaah by His greatest Name, which, if He is called by it, He responds, and if He is asked by it, He gives." [167]

`Abdullaah Ibn Buraidah al-Aslamee narrated from his father, who said: The Prophet ﷺ heard a man supplicating, and he was saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللهُ لا إِلهَ إِلاّ أَنْت ، الأَحَدُ الصَّمَدُ الَّذي لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يولَدْ ، وَلَمْ يَكنْ لَهُ كُفُواً أَحَد

"Allaahumma innee as-aluka bi annee ash-hadu annaka ant-Allaahu, laa ilaaha illaa ant, al-aḥad uṣ-Samad, alladhee lam yalid wa lam yoolad, wa lam yakun lahoo kufuwan aḥad."

(O Allaah, indeed, I ask you by my testifying that You are Allaah, there is no one worthy of worship except You, the One, as-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need), the one who does not beget, nor was begotten, and there is none who is like Him)

So, he ﷺ said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَقَدْ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ بِاسْمِهِ الأَعْظَمِ الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، وَإِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ أَعْطَى

"By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he has asked Allaah by His Greatest Name, the one which if He is called upon by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives." [168]

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[167] Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1300) and the wording is his, Sunan Abu Dawood (1495), and Sunan Ibn Maajah (3858), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The wording within the brackets is from Sunan Ibn Maajah. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (3411)

[168] Sunan Abu Dawood (985, 1493), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3475), Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1301), and Sunan Ibn Maajah (3857) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee.

b. Sending Prayers Upon The Prophet ﷺ:

Faḍhaalah Ibn `Ubaid رضي الله عنه narrated: The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ heard a person supplicating during prayer. He did not mention the greatness of Allaah, nor did he invoke blessings on the Prophet ﷺ. The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

عَجِلَ هَذَا

"This one has rushed (in his supplication)."

Then he ﷺ called him and said:

إِذَا صَلَّى أَحَدُكُمْ، فَلْيَبْدَأْ بِتَمْجِيدِ رَبِّهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ، وَالثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، ثُمَّ يَدْعُو بَعْدُ بِمَا شَاءَ

"If any of you wants to supplicate, let him start by glorifying his Lord and praising Him, then let him send blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ, then let him pray for whatever he wants." [169]

c. Be Humble While Supplicating:

Show humility by acknowledging personal flaws and weaknesses.

Sa`d Ibn Abee Waqqaas رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِذَا نَزَلَ بِرَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ كَرْبٌ أَوْ بَلَاءٌ مِنَ بَلَاءِ الدُّنْيَا دَعَا بِهِ فُرِّجَ عَنْهُ؟

"Shall I not inform you about a thing, that when distress or a calamity from the calamities of the worlds afflicts one of you, and were he to supplicate with it, he will be relieved of it (the calamity)?"

It was said: "Yes! (Do inform us)." He ﷺ said:

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[169] Sunan Abu Dawood (1481) and Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3477) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

دُعَاءُ ذِي النُّونِ

"The supplication of Dhu al-Noon (Yunus عليه السلام):

﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

{None has the right to be worshiped but You (O Allaah)], Glorified (and Exalted) are You [above all that (evil) they associate with You]. Truly, I have been one of the wrongdoers.}" [170]

In another narration, **Sa`d** رضي الله عنه mentioned that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

دَعْوَةُ ذِي النُّونِ إِذْ دَعَا وَهُوَ فِي بَطْنِ الحُوتِ: ﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَدْعُ بِهَا رَجُلٌ مُسْلِمٌ فِي شَيْءٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا اسْتَجَابَ اللَّهُ لَهُ

"The supplication of Dhu al-Noon (Yunus عليه السلام) when he supplicated, while in the belly of the whale, which was: {There is none worthy of worship except You, Glory to You. Indeed, I have been one of the transgressors}. So indeed, no Muslim man supplicates with it for anything, ever, except that Allaah responds to him." [171]

Yunus عليه السلام began his supplication by affirming the oneness of Allaah in worship and freeing Him from all partners and defects, and he continued by admitting his own shortcomings. [172]

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[170] al-Nasaa'ee in al-Kubraa (10416) and al-Ḥaakim in al-Mustadrak (1864) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (1744)

[171] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3505) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[172] This *Du`aa* has been explained in detail in my other book: **Explanation Of The Supplications For Anxiety And Sorrow**, Chapter (7)

F. Fruits Of Acknowledging Absolute Power To Allaah And Weakness For Self:

The agitation subsides, and the heart finds peace when it is reminded that:

a. Allaah Is The Source Of All Power:

Allaah alone possesses absolute power and control over everything that exists. No one else - whether human, Angel, Jinn, or any other being - has any power independent of Him. Any strength, ability, or influence that others appear to have is only by Allaah's Will and Permission.

b. Nothing Happens Without His Will And Permission:

Every event, big or small, occurs only because Allaah wills it to happen. As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ﴾

{It is not for any person to believe, except by the Permission of Allaah} [173]

Allaah تعالى also says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُّؤَجَّلًا﴾

{And no person can ever die except by Allaah's Permission and at an appointed term} [174]

c. Human Power Is Limited And Dependent On Allaah:

Humans may have strength or authority, but it is temporary and conditional. As Allaah تعالى says:

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[173] Surah Yunus (10): 100

[174] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 145

﴿وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

{And you will not, unless (it be) that Allaah wills, the Lord of the worlds} [175]

A Believer recognizes that his own abilities - like intelligence, wealth, or influence - are gifts from Allaah, not personal achievements.

d. It Cultivates Humility And Reliance On Allaah:

Affirming Allaah's power leads to *Tawakkul* (trust in Allaah). It encourages Believers to seek help through prayer, knowing that only Allaah can truly change their situation.

e. It Rejects All Forms Of *Shirk* (Associating Partners With Allaah In Worship):

Believing that anyone or anything else has power equal to or independent of Allaah is considered Shirk. This affirmation protects the purity of Islamic monotheism. The majority of those who commit Shirk believe that there is someone as powerful as Allaah or that creation has control over Allaah's dominion.

f. It Brings Comfort And Strength:

In times of hardship, knowing that Allaah is in control brings peace and hope. It reminds believers that no harm or benefit can reach them except by His decree.

[175] Surah al-Takweer (81): 29

G. Reward For Acknowledging That One Is Incapable Without Allaah's Help:

Mu`aadh Ibn Anas رضي الله عنه reported: The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said: "Whoever eats food and then says:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنِي هَذَا وَرَزَقَنِيهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَوْلٍ مِنِّي وَلَا قُوَّةٍ، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

Al-ḥamdu lillaahi-lladhee aṭ`amanee haadhaa, wa razaqaneehi min ghairi ḥawlin minnee wa laa quwwah

(All praise is to Allaah Who has fed me this and provided it for me without any effort from me nor power), all his past (minor) sins will be forgiven." [176]

[176] Sunan Abu Dawood (4023), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3458), Sunan Ibn Maajah (3285) and the wording is his, and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

11. "You Know"

And when the supplicant says:

وَتَعْلَمُ

"You know"

And also, when he says:

وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الغُيُوبِ

"and You know the hidden and the unseen"

A. Affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge And Profound Wisdom:

The supplicant is acknowledging Allaah's Complete and Perfect knowledge about everything, emphasizing that nothing is hidden from Him, and that His knowledge encompasses everything:

﴿وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا﴾

{And that Allaah surrounds (comprehends) all things in (His) Knowledge.} [177]

This is similar to the supplication of Ibraaheem عليه السلام:

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِي وَمَا نُعْلِنُ ۗ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِن شَيْءٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ﴾

[177] Surah al-Talaaq (65): 12

{Our Lord, indeed, You know what we conceal and what we reveal, and nothing on the earth or in the heaven is hidden from Allaah.} [178]

The praise and affirmation of Allaah's تعالى Perfect Knowledge is emphasized three times in this *Du`aa*. As previously mentioned, [179] nothing in the Heavens or on earth is hidden from Him.

Allaah تعالى said to the Angels:

﴿قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ﴾

{He said: "Did I not tell you that I know the *Ghayb* (unseen) in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing?"} [180]

He تعالى also said:

﴿أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾

{Did they not know that Allaah knows their secrets and their private conversations and that Allaah is the Knower of the unseen?} [181]

He تعالى also said:

﴿إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ﴾

{Verily, He knows that which is spoken aloud (openly) and that which you conceal} [182]

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[178] Surah Ibraaheem (14): 38
[179] See Chapter (6) of this book
[180] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 33
[181] Surah al-Tawbah (9): 78
[182] Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21): 110

He تعالى further said:

﴿يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ﴾

{(Allaah) knows the fraud of the eyes, and all that the breasts conceal} [183]

Imaam al-Ṭabaraanee mentioned in al-Mu`jam al-Kabeer that every morning and every evening the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate to Allaah تعالى, and in that supplication he ﷺ used to say:

وَالسِّرُّ عِنْدَكَ عَلَانِيَةٌ

"The secret, for You, is all revealed." [184]

Meaning: O Allaah! Nothing is hidden from You!

Allaah تعالى created everything and knows best what is suitable for each one and at what time. He تعالى provides for His creation from His Perfect Knowledge and Wisdom, granting it when it benefits them and withholding it when it is harmful.

ß. The Wisdom Behind Withholding:

If Allaah تعالى granted everyone everything they desired in this world, instead of feeling grateful, people would transgress, as Allaah تعالى says:

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[183] Surah Ghaafir (40): 19

[184] Mu`jam al-Kabeer (8027). Al-Haithamee said in Majma` al-Zawaaid (17009): "It is reported by al-Ṭabaraanee and in its chain is Fadhdhaal bin Jubair and he is "Ḍha'eef" and there is a consensus about this." Also graded as "Ḍha'eef Jiddan" (Extremely Weak) by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ḍha'eefah (6253)

﴿وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ – وَهُوَ الَّذِى يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا۟ وَيَنشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ وَهُوَ الْوَلِىُّ الْحَمِيدُ﴾

{And if Allaah were to expand the provision for His slaves, they would surely rebel on earth, but He sends down by measure as He wills. Verily, He is, concerning His slaves, Well-Acquainted, All-Seer (of things that benefit them). And it is He Who sends down the rain after they have despaired and spreads His Mercy. And He is the *Walee* (Helper, Supporter, Protector, Lord), the Worthy of all praise.} [185]

Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Katheer رحمه الله commented on these Aayaat, saying:

﴿وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾

{And if Allaah were to extend the provision for His servants, they would surely rebel on the earth,} means: "If we provided them with more provisions than they need, it would incite rebellion and cause them to act arrogantly and insolently against one another."

﴿وَلَٰكِن يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَآءُ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ﴾

{But He sends down by measure as He wills. Verily, He is, concerning His slaves, Well-Acquainted, All-Seer (of things that benefit them)} meaning: "Nevertheless, He تعالى provides for them based on what is truly beneficial for them, and He knows best. Therefore, He تعالى enriches those who are worthy of wealth and impoverishes those who deserve to be poor."

[185] Surah al-Shooraa (42): 27-28

"He is the One who is in control of His creation, taking care of what will benefit them in this world and the Hereafter. All the outcomes of His decrees and actions are good, for which He is worthy of all praise." [186]

If people were given everything they wished for, they would neglect their duties to obey Allaah, succumbing to their desires and uniting in their pursuits, even if such actions involved sin and oppression. So, even when He تعالى withholds, there is kindness and mercy for His creation.

C. Definition Of Allaah's Perfect Knowledge And Profound Wisdom:

a. Affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge:

Believing that Allaah's knowledge is:

i. All-encompassing: Allaah's Knowledge includes: the past, present, and future; what is apparent and what is hidden; what is in the hearts and the minds.

ii. Absolute: Nothing escapes His knowledge, no matter how small or hidden.

iii. Eternal: Allaah's Knowledge has no beginning and no end.

iv. Comprehensive: Allaah's Knowledge includes everything—what is, what was, what will be, and what could have been under different circumstances.

b. Affirming Allaah's Profound Wisdom:

Believing that Allaah's Wisdom is Profound and Just:

i. Allaah never does anything without purpose or randomly.

ii. His decisions are always based on infinite wisdom, even if we don't understand them.

[186] Tafseer Ibn Katheer

iii. What may seem like a hardship or delay is often part of a greater plan that benefits us in ways we cannot see.

D. Implications Of Belief In Allaah's Knowledge And Wisdom

a. Trust And Reliance (التوكُل *Al-Tawakkul*):

Knowing that Allaah knows what is best for us leads the Believer to rely on Him fully.

b. Patience In Trials (الصبر *Al-Ṣabr*):

Understanding that Allaah's wisdom lies behind every decree helps one endure hardships with patience.

c. Contentment (الرِضا *Al-Riḍhaa*) In Accepting The Decree:

Understanding that what has been decreed is from Allaah's Wisdom leads to contentment (*al-Riḍhaa*) and a peaceful heart.

d. Gratitude (الشُكر *Al-Shukr*):

It also encourages gratitude in times of ease, recognizing that all blessings are given with wisdom.

e. Humility (التَواضُع *Al-Tawaaḍhu`*):

Recognizing our limited understanding in comparison to Allaah's perfect knowledge cultivates humility.

f. Obedience And Submission (الانقياد *Al-Inqiyaad*):

Since His Commandments are wise and beneficial, they teach the Believers to submit to His Commands, even when they don't fully grasp the reasons behind them.

g. It Deepens Love And Awe For Allaah (المحبة *Al-Muḥabbah*):

Knowing that Allaah is both All-Knowing (*Al-`Aleem*) and All-Wise (*Al-Ḥakeem*) increases our love, awe, and reverence for Him. It strengthens our relationship with Him, knowing He is always aware of our situation and acts in our best interest.

Affirming Allaah's Perfect Knowledge and Profound Wisdom is part of believing in His Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes. These Attributes are not abstract ideas; they directly affect how a Believer views life, fate (*Qadr*), and the purpose behind every event.

12. "And I Do Not Know"

And when the supplicant says:

وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ

"and I do not know"

The individual is acknowledging his own ignorance. Admitting that "I do not know" is the gateway to deeper truth and humility.

In the Qur'aan, Allaah تعالى mentioned that ignorance is part of man's nature in the early stages until he receives guidance and acts on it:

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

{Indeed, he (man) was unjust and ignorant.} [187]

A. The Mentioning Of Power Before Knowledge:

Earlier, [188] we read that knowledge is mentioned before power because the person is seeking guidance from Allaah, which is why knowledge is mentioned first. And here, in the middle of the *Du`aa*, power is mentioned before knowledge, as in the phrase: **"You have power, I have none. And You know, I know not."** This is after supplicant says: **"I ask You from Your immense bounty,"** and only Allaah is capable of bestowing His bounty. Hence, the person says: **"You are able, and I am not,"** mentioning power first because it is connected to attaining Allaah's bounty.

This sequence is also mentioned in the Qur'aan, in Allaah's instruction to His Messenger ﷺ to declare to the people that he, Muhammad ﷺ,

[187] Surah al-A`raf (7): 188

[188] See Chapter (6) of this book.

has no power to cause harm or benefit to himself or others, and he ﷺ knows only what Allaah تعالى has taught him.

﴿قُل لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

{Say (O Muhammad): "I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allaah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me. I am not but only a warner and a bringer of good tidings to a people who believe."} [189]

The phrase: **"I have no power,"** is in the first part of the Aayah: **{I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allaah has willed.}**

And the phrase: **"I know not,"** is in the second part of the Aayah: **{And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me.}**

٣. Humility Of The Angels:

Allaah تعالى mentioned:

﴿قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

{They (Angels) said: "Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise."} [190]

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[189] Surah al-Aḥzaab (33): 72
[190] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 32

This is an act of glorification and exaltation by the Angels towards Allaah تبارك وتعالى, affirming that no one can encompass anything of His knowledge except what He wills, and that they (the Angels) know nothing except what Allaah تعالى has taught them.

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"This is an admission from the Angels that they only know what Allaah has taught them, despite the fact that they are Angels who are close to Allaah تعالى." [191]

C. There Is Always Someone Better In Knowledge:

No one knows everything; no matter how knowledgeable someone is, there is always someone who knows even more. A person may be good at physics but weak in biology. Even in the field of medicine, people are at different levels; one person might be a neurologist, while the other is a general physician. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

{But above each one who is endowed with knowledge is the All-Knowing (Allaah)} [192]

Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Katheer رحمه الله mentioned in his Tafseer:

"**Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣree** said:

ليس عالم إلا فوقه عالم حتى ينتهي إلى الله عز وجل

"There is no knowledgeable person, but there is another person with more knowledge (than him) until it ends at Allaah عز وجل."

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[191] Tafseer of Surah al-Baqarah by Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen

[192] Surah Yusuf (12): 76

Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما stated:

الله العليم فوق كل عالم

"Allaah is the All-Knowing, and He is above every knowledgeable person."

Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما also said:

يكون هذا أعلم من هذا، وهذا أعلم من هذا، والله فوق كل عالم

"This person has more knowledge than that person, and (then a third) person (comes, who) is more knowledgeable than the (first) person, and Allaah is above all knowledgeable people."

Qataadah رحمه الله said:

وفوق كل ذي علم عليم، حتى ينتهي العلم إلى الله، منه بدئ، وتعلمت العلماء، وإليه يعود

"Over every person endowed with knowledge is a more knowledgeable person until all knowledge ends with Allaah. Verily, knowledge started from Allaah, and from Him the scholars learn, and to Him all knowledge returns." [193]

Ultimately, all forms of knowledge, whether religious or worldly, end with Allaah, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. Knowledge began with Him, and to Him it will return.

D. Things Associated With Knowledge:

There are three things associated with knowledge:

a. *Al-`Ilm* (العلم Knowledge)

b. *Al-Huda* (الهدى Guidance)

c. *Al-Ḥikmah* (الحكمة Wisdom)

[193] Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/344)

a. *Al-`Ilm* (العلم Knowledge):

This pertains to possessing information or awareness of the Texts or having them memorized. However, knowing the Texts does not necessarily imply one is guided or possesses wisdom.

Example: Shaiṭaan was aware of Allaah's Commands but chose to disobey, claiming superiority over Aadam. His understanding misled him, placing him among the misguided.

Another instance: The People of the Book recognized the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ as intimately as they recognized their own children.

﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

{Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) know him as they know their own sons. But verily a party of them conceal the truth while they know it} [194]

b. *Al-Huda* (الهدى Guidance):

Shaikh al-Sa`dee رحمه الله in the Tafseer of Surah al-Kahf defined al-*Huda* as: **"Beneficial Knowledge and Righteous Deeds."** [195]

In other words, True Guidance is defined as the ability to transform Knowledge into Action.

In the Qur'aan, whenever Allaah تعالى states: **"He increases in guidance,"** it refers to a growth in beneficial knowledge and virtuous actions.

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[194] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 146

[195] Tafseer al-Sa`dee, Surah al-Kahf (18): 13

Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى﴾

{And Allaah increases those who were guided, in guidance} [196]

And also:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ﴾

{And those who are guided - He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness.} [197]

A person may possess knowledge, yet he engages in what he has been forbidden from doing, while neglecting what he has been instructed to do. Such an individual lacks proper guidance.

c. *Al-Ḥikmah* (الحكمة Wisdom):

It is all about grasping the meaning of the Texts and what they truly signify. As Allaah تعالى tells us:

﴿يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

{He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has (undoubtedly) been given much good. And none will remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding.} [198]

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[196] Surah Maryam (19): 76
[197] Surah Muhammad (47):17
[198] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 269

The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما saying:

اللَّهُمَّ فَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ

"O Allaah! (Please) give him a deep understanding of the Deen." [199]

Ḥikmah involves an individual using knowledge, wealth, and strength to achieve positive, beneficial results.

This can further be divided into three parts:

i. *Al-Ḥikmah* In Using And Interpreting The Texts Correctly:
Simply knowing or memorizing the Aayaat is insufficient if a person does not understand their correct implications.

Imaam al-Bukhaaree mentioned in his Ṣaḥeeḥ that Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنهما considered the Khawaarij and the heretics (al-Mulḥideen) as the worst of Allaah's creatures and said: **"These people took some Aayaat that had been revealed concerning the disbelievers and interpreted them and applied them to the Believers."** [200]

The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said about the Khawaarij:

قَوْمًا يَقْرَءُونَ القُرْآنَ لاَ يُجَاوِزُ حَنَاجِرَهُمْ

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[199] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (143) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (138-2477)
In another narration, the wording is:

اللَّهُمَّ عَلِّمْهُ الحِكْمَةَ

"O Allaah! Teach him wisdom." [Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3756)]
In Musnad Ahmad, the wording is:

اللهُمَّ فَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَعَلِّمْهُ التَّأْوِيلَ

"O Allaah! (Please) give him a deep understanding of the Deen and teach him the interpretation (of the Qur'aan)." [Musnad Ahmad (2397, 2879, 3032, 3102) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (2589)]

[200] English Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree Volume 9, Page No 49-50, Chapter on Killing the Khawaarij and the Mulḥideen

"…there will be some people who would recite the Qur'aan, but the Qur'aan will not reach beyond their throats." [201]

Meaning: They will repeat the words like parrots, but won't understand or act on them.

Throughout history, the Khawaarij have been a classic example of people lacking *Ḥikmah*. They kill the Believers while the Kuffaar are safe from their harm.

ii. *Al-Ḥikmah* In Conveying Texts, Proofs, And Arguments:

Ḥikmah is crucial for how individuals present their arguments. One can possess knowledge and guidance, yet still lack *Ḥikmah* in their speech, behavior, and presentation. As Allaah تعالى states:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَادِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

{(O Muhammad!) Invite (mankind) to the Way of your Lord (i.e., Islaam) with wisdom and fair preaching and argue with them in a better way.} [202]

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[201] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3344, 3610, 5058, 6931, 6934, 7432, 7562) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (1791, 2316, 2318, 2323, 2328, 2335, 2336)

[202] Surah al-Naḥl (16): 125

Ibn al-Qayyim رحمه الله stated: "Allaah تعالى has assigned certain levels in Da`wah, each depending upon the different types of people. The one who responds to the call - the wise acceptor (of truth) who is not a proud resistor of truth - such individuals are to be called towards the Deen using *Ḥikmah*. As for those who accept the truth but possess some ignorance and negligence, they should be guided towards the Deen through good admonition, specifically, by enjoining good and forbidding evil, along with encouraging righteousness and discouraging sins. As for the stubborn opponent of truth, one argues with them in a more effective way. And this is the most correct explanation of this Aayah." [Miftaah Daar al-Sa`aadah (1/153). Tafseer al-Qayyim]

Shaikh al-Sa`dee رحمه الله stated: "Part of this *Ḥikmah* is to invite the people (to the way of your Lord) with knowledge and not with ignorance; and to begin with the most important, then the next most important, and so on; with what is easy to understand

iii. *Al-Ḥikmah* In Resource Management:

Knowledge, wealth, time, and health are precious resources that require wise utilization. For example, suppose someone understands Arabic but dedicates his time to translating and spreading fabricated or weak *Aḥaadeeth*, while ignoring the many authentic ones that deserve translation; in that case, it reflects a lack of wisdom.

In this *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, the supplicant displays humility by acknowledging his own ignorance.

E. The Fragility Of Human Knowledge:

Human beings possess knowledge. They observe, memorize, analyze, and write down this knowledge. But for all their brilliance, their knowledge is:

a. Limited in scope,
b. Insufficient in depth,
c. Overshadowed by ignorance,
d. And destined to fade into forgetfulness. [203]

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and comprehend; and that which would be easy to accept completely; with gentleness and kindness (and without harshness). So if he submits with *Ḥikmah* (then that is better), otherwise, also include good admonition in your call - i.e., enjoining good and forbidding evil, along with encouragement towards righteousness and discouragement from sins." [Tafseer al-Sa`dee (1/452)]

[203] Allaah تعالى mentioned about Aadam عليه السلام:

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا﴾

{And We had already taken a promise from Aadam before, but he forgot; and We found not in him determination}, [Surah Ṭaahaa (20): 115]

Forgetfulness (*Nisyaan*) is part of our very creation. We forget facts, promises, blessings, and even our purpose - unless reminded by revelation. This is why the Qur'aan is called Dhikr (reminder) - a mercy to bring us back to what truly matters.

Human beings are born knowing nothing. And despite all that they acquire, they often act with arrogance, conjecture, and error. True knowledge in Islaam begins with recognizing the vastness of what one does not know.

F. The Six Levels of Knowledge:

a. *Al-`Ilm* (العلم Knowledge):

Which is to comprehend the reality of something as it truly is, with Yaqeen (absolute certainty).

b. *Al-Jahl al-Baseeṭ* (الجهل البسيط Minor Ignorance):

Which is the absence of complete comprehension.

c. *Al-Jahl al-Murakkab* (الجهل المركب Compounded Ignorance):

Which is to comprehend something in a way contrary to its true reality, e.g., a person is ignorant, and he is ignorant of the fact that he is ignorant.

d. *Al-Wahm* (الوهم Delusion):

Which is to think that one comprehends something despite the presence of that which should cause one to realize that one is incorrect.

e. *Al-Shakk* (الشك Doubt):

Which is to think that one comprehends something, yet he is aware of something contrary to it, which he believes has the same possibility of being the truth.

f. *Al-Ẓhann* (الظن Presumption/Assumption):

Which is comprehension of something, despite the presence of something contrary to it, but which is less likely to be true.

G. Limited Ability, Deficient Knowledge, Big Desires:

Man's ability is limited, and his knowledge is deficient. A man's inability is also accompanied by ignorance, unless Allaah has granted guidance to him.

There are three weaknesses that can hinder a person's ability to make correct decisions, so he is required to supplicate to Allaah. These weaknesses are:

a. Inadequate Knowledge:

As Allaah تعالى states:

﴿وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ﴾

{And they will never encompass anything of His knowledge except what He wills} [204]

﴿وَمَا أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾

{And you (O mankind) have not been given of knowledge except a little.} [205]

And in *Ḥadeeth Qudsi*, the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Allaah (تعالى) said:**

﴿يَا عِبَادِي كُلُّكُمْ ضَالٌّ إِلاَّ مَنْ هَدَيْتُهُ فَاسْتَهْدُونِي أَهْدِكُمْ﴾

[204] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 255
[205] Surah al-Israa' (17): 85

{O My servants! All of you are astray except those whom I guide. So, ask Me for guidance, and I will guide you.}" [206]

No matter how much we learn, we are surrounded by the unknown. The secrets of the soul, the depths of the unseen, the decree of tomorrow - all remain outside the grasp of human beings. What they know is but a drop from the ocean of Divine Knowledge.

Human knowledge is always limited. What they don't know is infinitely more than what they do. So, when a person says, "I do not know," it is to admit the greatness of Allaah and the humility of the self.

b. Hasty In Making Decisions:

Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَيَدْعُ الْإِنسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ ۖ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَانُ عَجُولًا﴾

{And man supplicates for evil as he supplicates for good, and man is ever hasty.} [207]

﴿إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا﴾

{Verily, man was created very impatient} [208]

Humans are inherently emotional beings, except those whom Allaah guides. Man tends to feel intense anxiety in difficult times and becomes greedy and selfish when things are easy. When in pain, man panics, complains, and despairs. When blessed, man becomes tight-fisted, narcissistic, and forgetful.

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[206] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (6246)
[207] Surah al-Israa' (17): 11
[208] Surah al-Ma`aarij (70): 19

This describes the typical state of a person lacking Faith (*Imaan*) as being weak, reactive, emotionally vulnerable, and strongly connected to the material world.

c. Doesn't Know The Consequences Of His Choices:

As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

{But perhaps you hate a thing while it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing while it is bad for you. And Allaah Knows, while you do not know.} [209]

And also in the saying of Allaah تعالى:

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

{Indeed, he (man) was unjust and ignorant.} [210]

Ẓhaloom (ظلوم) - deeply unjust, often to himself, others, or by violating Allaah's commands.

Jahool (جهول) - extremely ignorant, lacking awareness of the full implications of his actions and responsibilities.

These Aayaat are not merely a criticism but a reminder of human weaknesses, and an invitation to humility and responsibility. These Aayaat emphasize:

i. Man's tendency to misjudge or misuse power and freedom.

ii. The need for guidance through revelation.

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[209] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 216

[210] Surah al-A`raf (7): 188

iii. That without Allaah's guidance, man tends to oppress and fall into ignorance.

So, as Allaah تعالى says: **{And Allaah Knows, while you know not}**, it is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ instructed and emphasized the importance of seeking Allaah's تعالى guidance in all our affairs.

H. Qaaroon's Arrogance:

When someone says, **"O Allaah! You know and I do not,"** he demonstrates humility, unlike Qaaroon, who displayed arrogance by claiming his wealth was solely due to his own knowledge and power.

About Qaaroon's wealth, Allaah تعالى mentioned:

﴿إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ﴾

{Verily, Qaaroon was from Moosa's people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. And We gave him of the treasures, that of which the keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men…} [211] [212]

And Qaaroon said about this wealth:

﴿قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِي﴾

{He said: "This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess."} [213]

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[211] If this is about the keys, then what about the actual treasure?
[212] Surah al-Qasas (28): 76
[213] Surah al-Qasas (28): 78

So, because of his arrogance and haughtiness, Allaah تعالى punished him:

﴿فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِن فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنتَصِرِينَ﴾

{So, We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allaah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves.} [214]

I. Arrogance Will Obstruct Prayers:

Arrogance can obstruct prayers by hindering humility. In Islaam, humility is crucial. By embracing humility, an individual strengthens his relationship with Allaah. The key to receiving Allaah's mercy and acceptance is to pray with humility, and the *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is the perfect embodiment of humbleness that draws a slave closer to his Master.

While reading the Qur'aan, one comes across the heartfelt supplications of the Prophets, such as Nooh, Ibraaheem, Ismaa`eel, Ayyoob, Yunus, and many others عليهم السلام, each of whom supplicated with great humility. As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾

{Invoke your Lord with humility and secrecy. He likes not the aggressors} [215]

The phrase: **"You have power, I have none. And You know, I know not,"** refers to the fact that absolute power and perfect knowledge

[214] Surah al-Qasas (28): 81
[215] Surah al-A`raf (7): 55

belong to Allaah alone, and the slave has no share of them except what Allaah تعالى decrees for him.

As Allaah تعالى instructed His Messenger to declare:

﴿قُل لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

{Say (O Muhammad): "I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allaah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me. I am not, but only a warner and a bringer of good tidings to a people who believe."} [216]

[216] Surah al-A`raf (7): 188

13. "And You Know All That Hidden And The Unseen"

And when the supplicant says:

وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ

"and You know all that is hidden and the unseen"

He acknowledges that only Allaah has the knowledge of the unseen. Part of Allaah's Knowledge about the unseen is that He تعالى knows what will happen in the future, and He تعالى knows what has happened in the past, and nothing from the present is hidden from Him. [217]

The phrase: ﴿عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ﴾ **{the Knower of the Unseen}** is in singular form, and it refers to the Absolute (or Universal) Unseen and does not require an exaggerated expression. This phrase appears six times in the Qur'aan. [218] Whereas, the phrase: ﴿عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾ **{Knower of all the secrets (and unseen)}** is in plural form and appears four times in the Qur'aan. [219] It refers to numerous unseen matters, and Allaah knows them all and is aware of the secrets of every unseen thing, even the most subtle details. The plural form is mainly used to denote the multitude of secrets, especially those within people's hearts, and more broadly, the secrets of all the creation. As Allaah تعالى says in Surah al-Tawbah:

﴿أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾

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217 See Chapters (6) and (11) of this book

218 In Surah al-An`aam (6): 73; Surah al-Ra`d (13): 9; Surah al-Sajdah (32): 6; Surah al-Ḥashr (59):22; Surah al-Taghaabun (64): 18; and Surah al-Jinn (72): 26

219 In Surah al-Maaidah (5): 109, 116; Surah al-Tawbah (9): 78; Surah Saba' (34): 48

{Know they not that Allaah knows their secrets, and their *Najwaa* (conspiracies), and that Allaah is the All-Knower of the unseen?} [220]

On the Day of Judgment, when the Messengers will be asked about the actions of their people, they will respond, saying:

﴿يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾

{[Be warned of] the Day when Allaah will assemble the Messengers and say: "What was the response you received?" They will say: "We do not know. Indeed, it is You who is Knower of the unseen"} [221]

A. Thematic Focus Of *Du`aa Al-Istikhaarah*:

The theme of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* strongly concentrates on two of Allaah's most Beautiful Names: *al-`Aleem* (العليم - The All-Knowing) and *al-Qadeer* (القدير - The All-Powerful), and two of His Noble Attributes: *al-`Ilm* (العلم - Knowledge) and *al-Qudrah* (القدرة - Power).

a. *Al-`Aleem* (The All-Knowing):

The Beautiful Name of Allaah, *al-`Aleem* (العليم - The All-Knowing), indicates His Perfect Attribute *al-`Ilm* (العلم - Knowledge).

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, when a person supplicates, he is acknowledging his own limited knowledge and inability to foresee the consequences of his choices. He is essentially saying: "O Allaah, You know and I do not know." The *Du`aa* explicitly states this by asking Allaah, the One Who knows the unseen, to guide him to what is truly best for him in his religious and worldly affairs, and his Hereafter. It's

[220] Surah al-Tawbah (9): 78
[221] Surah al-Maaidah (5): 109

an admission that only Allaah has perfect knowledge of what the future holds and what is genuinely beneficial.

b. *Al-Qadeer* (The All-Powerful):

The Beautiful Name of Allaah, *al-Qadeer* (القدير - The All-Powerful), indicates His Perfect Attribute *al-Qudrah* (القدرة - Power).

By asking Allaah to "decree it for me" and "make it easy for me," the supplicant is acknowledging Allaah's absolute power and ability to make things happen or prevent them. He is entrusting the outcome to the One Who has complete control over all affairs. If a matter is good, he asks Allaah to make it easy and blessed; if it is bad or harmful, he asks Him to avert it and replace it with something better. This demonstrates reliance on Allaah's omnipotence to shape events in accordance with His Will.

Together, these Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes of Allaah form the spiritual backbone of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*: Knowledge to guide and Power to enable.

The verbs أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ (*astakheeruka bi`ilmika*) and وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ (*wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika*) are not just requests, they are declarations of trust. The supplicant isn't merely asking for a sign; he is affirming that Allaah's Knowledge and Power are the only reliable sources for decision-making.

ß. Attributing Knowledge Of The Unseen To Other Than Allaah Is Kufr:

The phrase, "All-Knower of the Unseen," indicates that the servant attributes all knowledge to Allaah سبحانه وتعالى and that no one from the creation knows anything of the knowledge of the unseen except what

Allaah تعالى informed His Prophets and Messengers. So whoever claims to have knowledge of the unseen has lied and committed disbelief (*Kufr*).

Rather, the essence of *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah) often begins with attributing to others what belongs solely to Allaah: knowledge of the unseen (*`Ilm al-Ghayb*) and independent power or will.

C. Key Foundation Of Shirk:

Throughout history, a recurring pattern has emerged among cult leaders across civilizations. Whenever they sought to establish unquestionable authority over their followers, they deceived them by claiming to possess knowledge of the unseen or divine power. This manipulation is central to their control and the often-tragic outcomes of these groups. These are the very claims that belong solely to Allaah تبارك وتعالى and form a foundation of Shirk when ascribed to others.

a. Claiming Knowledge Of The Unseen:

As Allaah says:

﴿قُل لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

{Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the *Ghayb* (unseen) except Allaah} [222]

Knowledge of the unseen is exclusively attributed to Allaah alone. No human, jinn, or other creation possesses this knowledge. To claim otherwise, or to believe that someone else possesses it, is considered a form of *Shirk* because it attributes a divine quality to a created being. This includes fortune-telling, astrology, or believing that a saint or Prophet can know the future without Allaah's direct revelation.

[222] Surah al-Naml (27): 65

Many cult leaders falsely claim they know the future, hidden secrets of people's lives, and can predict death, success, or failure, etc.

The heretics and the Soofee cult leaders claim to receive *Kashf*, [223] and they also claim to receive revelations directly from Allaah, as they say:

حدثني قلبي عن ربي

"My heart informed me from my Lord…"

b. Believing In Autonomous Power:

The idea that someone can act without Allaah's Will or support contradicts *Tawḥeed al-Ruboobiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship). Even the Mushriks of Quraysh acknowledged Allaah as the Creator, but their error was in attributing divine powers to intermediaries.

The cult leaders often pretend they can heal without means, cause harm or bring benefit supernaturally, and grant spiritual salvation.

c. Historical Patterns:

i. False Divinity:

The likes of Fir`aun (Pharaoh), who claimed to be the supreme lord.

ii. Divine Helpers:

The likes of Abdaal, *Aqtaab* (sing. Qutub), Sultaan *al-Awliyaa*. The heretics and the *Soofees* falsely claim that these Abdaal and *Aqtaab* help Allaah in governing His creation.

iii. False Prophets:

The likes of Musaylimah and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qaadiyaan, who claimed to receive divine revelations.

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[223] In dreams, a person might see distant places or objects while asleep, but in *Kashf*, Soofees claim they can: "see something distant, absent, or from the Unseen while they are fully awake." The Soofees regard *Kashf* as a vital source of hidden knowledge for their elders and Shuyookh.

iv. Modern Cults:

The likes of Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Shoko Asahara were leaders of doomsday cults and claimed prophetic or messianic roles, demanding complete obedience, and led their followers to mass murders and suicides.

D. Fortunetellers Are Liars:

`Aaishah رضي الله عنها narrated: Some people asked the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ about soothsayers. He ﷺ said: **"They are nothing (i.e., they are liars)."** Upon this, they said to him: "O Messenger of Allaah! But sometimes they make true predictions." Thereupon, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

تِلْكَ الْكَلِمَةُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَخْطَفُهَا مِنَ الْجِنِّيِّ فَيَقُرُّهَا فِي أُذُنِ وَلِيِّهِ، فَيَخْلِطُونَ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ كَذْبَةٍ

"That is a word pertaining to truth which a Jinn snatches (from the angels) and whispers into the ears of his friend (the soothsayers) and would add a hundred lies to it." [224]

`Aaishah رضي الله عنها also narrated: The Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَتَحَدَّثُ فِي الْعَنَانِ بِالْأَمْرِ يَكُونُ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَسْمَعُ الشَّيَاطِينُ الْكَلِمَةَ فَتَقُرُّهَا فِي أُذُنِ الْكَاهِنِ كَمَا تُقَرُّ الْقَارُورَةُ فَيَزِيدُونَ مَعَهَا مِائَةَ كَذِبَةٍ

"While the Angels talk amidst the clouds and mention the matters that are going to happen on earth, the devils steal a hearing (i.e., listen to it stealthily) and pour (communicate) it in the ears of a

[224] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (5762, 6213, 7561) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (122-2228, 123-2228). In other narrations in the Ṣaḥeeḥain, the wording is: **"And they would add to it more than a hundred lies."**

soothsayer as one pours something in a bottle, and they add one hundred lies to that (one word).” [225]

Ɛ. Fortunetellers At Your Doorsteps:

Avoid apps, websites, or videos – especially those that circulate on social media – asking questions like, “What is your destiny?” or “What will you be in ten years?” or something similar. Personality quizzes, astrology apps, horoscopes, zodiac signs, numerology, palm reading, crystal balls, algorithm-generated content, and “AI destiny predictors” often present themselves as harmless, but they mimic the same claims as ancient soothsayers. Those kinds of apps and social media trends frequently blur the line between entertainment and claims of knowing the unseen. Therefore, interacting with such content is akin to consulting fortune-tellers, which is *Ḥaraam* in Islaam.

Simply asking a fortune-teller, whether as a joke or out of curiosity, without truly believing in him, will nullify one’s prayers for forty days. Believing in a fortune-teller is considered a Major Kufr, which expels a person from Islaam.

Ṣafiyyah narrated that some of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ informed her that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ أربعين ليلة

“He who visits a diviner (`*Arraaf*) and asks him about anything, his prayers extending to forty nights will not be accepted.” [226]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that Allaah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَتَى كَاهِنًا، فَصَدَّقَهُ بِمَا يَقُولُ، فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

[225] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3210, 3288)
[226] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (125-2230)

"If anyone goes to a fortune–teller and believes in what he says, he has disbelieved in that which was revealed to Muhammad." [227]

The Lajna said in their Fataawa:
"This means that those who go to fortune-tellers to ask them anything, their *Ṣalaah* shall not be accepted for forty nights, but in case that they also believe them, then they are *Kaafir*." [228]

Indeed, the root of *Shirk* lies in the claim of possessing knowledge of the unseen and the belief in having absolute power to act independently, without reliance upon Allaah.

Instead of wondering, "What will happen to me?", consider asking, "What does Allaah want from me at this moment?" This change in perspective transforms curiosity into a sense of purpose, helping the heart align with *Tawḥeed*.

[227] Sunan Ibn Maajan (639) and the wording is his, Sunan al-Tirmidhee (135), and Sunan Abu Dawood (3904) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. In Sunan Abu Dawood, the wording is: **"he has nothing to do with what has been sent down to Muhammad ﷺ."**
[228] Faatawa Lajna (1/621)

14. "O Allaah! If You Know That This..."

And when the supplicant says:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا

"O Allaah! If You know that this..."

The individual is seeking guidance from Allaah based on what He تعالى knows about unseen matters. This supplication instills trust in Allaah in the heart of the Believer, as the supplication for guidance involves entrusting the matter to Allaah while making the effort to supplicate. This is the true essence of trust. When he says: "O Allaah, if you know that this matter is..." it signifies that the servant is entrusting his matter to his Lord.

A. A Clarification:

The phrase, **"O Allaah! If you know..."** is not questioning Allaah's knowledge, implying: "Do you know or not?" This is because the person has already affirmed Allaah's Complete and Perfect knowledge of His creation. The doubt here is about whether the matter is good or evil.

This is not raising questions regarding Allaah's Knowledge, as it is contradictory for someone to have doubts while simultaneously seeking *Khair* (good) by saying: **"O Allaah! I ask for guidance by the virtue of Your knowledge."**

How can this be a doubt when the supplicant has already affirmed this, when he said: **"You are capable, and I am not. You know, and I do not, and You know the unseen"**?

Rather, this phrase aligns with the saying of Allaah تعالى:

﴿وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

{But it may be that you dislike something while it is good for you, and it may be that you like something while it is bad for you. And Allaah Knows, while you do not know} [229]

This Aayah is a reminder of the wisdom of Divine Decree and the limits of human knowledge. Often, what appears painful or unfavorable to us may carry unseen benefits, and what seems desirable may hide harm. Allaah's knowledge encompasses all outcomes - past, present, and future - while ours is narrow and emotionally driven.

In context, this Aayah was revealed regarding the obligation to fight in Allaah's cause, something that some of the Believers found difficult. However, Allaah clarified that what they dislike may be beneficial for them, and what they love may be harmful.

This principle extends far beyond warfare. It's a timeless reminder to trust in Allaah's Knowledge and Wisdom, especially when life takes unexpected turns. A servant's love or hate for something is often based on immediate perception, while Allaah's knowledge encompasses the full reality - past, present, and future.

This is an Aayah that invites surrender, not in defeat, but in trust.

So, as mentioned earlier, Allaah تعالى knows what will happen in the future, and He تعالى knows what has happened in the past, and nothing from the present is hidden from Him. [230]

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[229] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 216

[230] See Chapter (6) and (11) of this book

So, after acknowledging Allaah's Perfect and Complete Knowledge of everything, this phrase means: "O Allaah! You know better, and I do not. So, according to Your Knowledge of the unseen, if this is good for me, then provide it for me; and if, according to Your Knowledge, this matter is harmful for me, then protect me from it."

15. "That This Matter..."

And when the supplicant says:

أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ « ثُمَّ تُسَمِّيهِ بِعَيْنِهِ »

"that this matter" «and he should mention it by name**»**

A. Mentioning The Need:

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said: "One should not say:

أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ

That this matter;

Instead, he should directly mention his need here." [231]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله added: "He should express his need for which he is supplicating. If he plans to travel, he should say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا السفر

"O Allaah! If You know that this journey..."

If he wants to buy something, he should say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ شرائي هَذَا الشيء

"O Allaah! If You know that if buying this thing..." [232]

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[231] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (8/244)
[232] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/255)

B. One Matter At A Time:

Scholars differed on this issue into two opinions:

a. The First Opinion:

It is permissible to combine more than one thing in a single supplication.

Some scholars have stated that it is permissible for a Believer to seek Allaah's guidance in more than one matter in a single *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, and to mention all the matters he is confused about in the same supplication.

b. The Second Opinion:

It is better to allocate *al-Istikhaarah* prayer for each matter separately.

It is preferred to supplicate for one specific matter at a time. The phrase: هَذَا الأَمْرَ **"this matter…"** in *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* uses the singular form (*haadhal-amr*), indicating that the supplication is meant to focus on one specific matter at a time and not multiple matters simultaneously. [233]

C. Additional Guidelines:

a. Those Who Are Weak In Arabic:

If a person is not fluent in `Arabic, then he can mention his need in his native language.

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[233] Some scholars do permit combining more than one matter in the supplication, especially if the person is unable to decide which matter to prioritize. However, the majority opinion remains that *Istikhaarah* is most appropriately done for one matter at a time, as reflected in the *Ḥadeeth*.

Questioner:
"O Noble Shaikh! What is the ruling on making *Du`aa*, in the prescribed places within the prayer (*al-Ṣalaah*), in a language other than `Arabic?"

Shaikh Ṣaaleḥ al-Fawzaan حفظه الله:
"No! If a person speaks good `Arabic, then he should supplicate in the `Arabic language. But if he is someone who does not speak proper Arabic, then let him supplicate in his language. There is nothing wrong with that." [234]

Questioner:
"What is the ruling on making *Du`aa* within *al-Ṣalaah* in a language other than `Arabic, especially for a person who does not speak proper `Arabic?"

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله:
"Making *Du`aa* in a language other than `Arabic - by a person who does not speak proper `Arabic - is permissible, in *al-Ṣalaah* and outside of it.

This person, who does not know Arabic, is burdened if he is required to make the *Du`aa* only in Arabic, as he is being burdened with something beyond his ability.

And Allaah تعالى said:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾

{Allaah burdens not a person beyond his scope} [235]

If a person says: "We will teach him". We respond to him saying: "Even if we teach him the wording, still, he does not know the meaning of it. So, where is the benefit?"

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[234] Video for this QA is available on Ilm4all YouTube channel.
[235] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 286

Anyhow, it is permissible for a person to supplicate to Allaah in his language, the language of the one who is supplicating, whether in `Arabic or any other language.

But as for the recitation of the Qur'aan, it is not permissible for anyone to recite it in any other language except `Arabic, in all circumstances.

And as for the prescribed *Adhkaar* (Allaah's remembrance which have been taught by the Prophet ﷺ), if a person finds it difficult to learn them in the `Arabic language, then there is no problem for him to do the remembrance of Allaah in his language.

But as you know, the Noble Name: "Allaah", for example, it is not possible to interpret/translate (the Name) into another language from `Arabic. So, if he cannot supplicate in `Arabic, then he can supplicate in another language.

So, how many categories are there? Three:

The First: That which is not permissible to say except in the `Arabic language only, i.e., the recitation of the Qur'aan.

The Second: That which is permissible to say in Arabic and other languages for the one who does not speak proper Arabic, i.e., to supplicate to Allaah with a *Du`aa* other than what has been prescribed.

The Third: The *Du`aa* which has been prescribed, like the *Adhkaar* and the likes, we say, if a person can say it in `Arabic, then he should say it in `Arabic, but if he has difficulties, then he can say it in his language."[236]

[236] Video for this QA is available on Ilm4all YouTube channel

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله:

"If he is unfamiliar with this supplication (or has not memorized it), he can use any easier phrases that resonate with him, such as: "O Allaah, decree good for me," "O Allaah, make good easy for me," "O Allaah, open my heart toward this journey if it is good for me," or "O Allaah, open my heart toward this marriage if it is good for me." He should make supplications using the words he understands and knows after the *Tasleem* (salutation). He should raise his hands and supplicate after praying the two *Rak`aat*." [237]

b. Do Not Supplicate For Evil Things:

It is also important to highlight that a person is not allowed to supplicate for something evil or sinful:

Abu Sa`eed al-Khuḍhree رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو، لَيْسَ بِإِثْمٍ وَلَا بِقَطِيعَةِ رَحِمٍ إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ إِحْدَى ثَلَاثٍ

"There is no Muslim who offers a supplication - as long as he does not supplicate for something sinful or for severing the ties of kinship - except that Allaah will give him one of three things in return for it..." [238]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

يُسْتَجَابُ لأَحَدِكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَدْعُ بِإِثْمٍ أَوْ قَطِيعَةِ رَحِمٍ، أَوْ يَسْتَعْجِلَ فَيَقُولُ: دَعَوْتُ فَلاَ أَرَى يَسْتَجِيبُ لِي، فَيَدَعُ الدُّعَاءَ

[237] From Shaikh Ibn Baaz's official website. Fatwa No. 12919

[238] Al-Adab al-Mufrad of al-Imaam al-Bukhaaree (710) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. Musnad Ahmad (11133) and graded as "Ḥasan-Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Targheeb (1633). Similar has been reported from Abu Hurairah Al-Adab al-Mufrad (711)

“The supplication of any of you is answered as long as he does not supplicate for something sinful or for severing the ties of kinship or become impatient and say: I supplicated, but it was not answered, and so he stops making supplication.” [239]

[239] Al-Adab al-Mufrad (655) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (92-2735)

16. "...Is Good For My Religion, My Worldly Life, And In My Hereafter"

And when the supplicant says:

خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي

"is good for my religion, my worldly life, and in my Hereafter." [240]

The supplicant mentions good before evil in his supplication: **"If you know that this matter is good for me in my religion and my livelihood..."** as a form of optimism. Mentioning good first reflects having a good opinion (*Ḥusn al-Ẓhann*) of Allaah, hoping that the matter will be decreed as good. This is in line with the Believer's attitude of optimism in Allaah's mercy and wisdom, because Allaah's mercy precedes His wrath.

In all our affairs, this is how our *Tawakkul* (reliance) upon Allaah تعالى should be. We should seek Allaah's guidance through prayers for our worldly matters. Likewise, when it comes to the affairs of the *Deen* and *Aakhirah*, we should turn to Allaah's Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, based on the understanding of the *Salaf al-Ṣaaleḥ* (the pious predecessors from the first three generations: the Companions, their followers, and those who follow them upon righteousness).

Here, the supplicant is seeking Allaah's guidance, saying: "O Allaah! You alone know the *Ghayb* (unseen), and nothing is hidden from You. So, O Allaah! In Your knowledge, if this is beneficial for me regarding

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[240] In Sunan Abu Dawood (1538) the wording is:

خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي، وَمَعَادِي، وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي

"...is better for me with regard to my religion, my worldly life, my afterlife, and the end result of my affairs."

my religious affairs, my worldly affairs, and the Hereafter, then grant it to me."

A. The Three Components Of Human Existence:

a. Religion: The Prophet ﷺ began by prioritizing well-being in one's religion because it is everything - it's the most important aspect of a person's life and the greatest blessing for humanity. All goodness stems from having sound Faith, while all evil comes from its absence. If Faith is compromised or lost, then everything is lost.

b. Worldly Life: Encompasses all aspects of a person's life on earth, such as health, family, finances, employment, and social ties. Through this supplication, an individual seeks Allaah's help in rectifying and blessing these aspects, aiming for a virtuous and stable life.

c. Hereafter: Refers to the afterlife (*Aakhirah*). This section of the prayer requests that one's actions and life choices on Earth result in a positive and righteous outcome in the Hereafter. It's a recognition that life isn't just about temporary worldly gains but also about preparing for eternal life.

B. Knowing Your Priorities:

In this *Du`aa*, we are taught to find a balance between our love for the *Dunyaa* and our hope for the *Aakhirah*. We should not emulate those who pursue only the *Dunyaa*, who rejoice when it is granted but grow resentful when it is taken away.

﴿فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِن لَّمْ يُعْطَوْا مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ﴾

{If they are given part thereof, they are pleased, but if they are not given thereof, behold! They are enraged!} [241]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

تَعِسَ عَبْدُ الدِّينَارِ وَالدِّرْهَمِ وَالْقَطِيفَةِ وَالْخَمِيصَةِ، إِنْ أُعْطِيَ رَضِيَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطَ لَمْ يَرْضَ

"Perish the slave of Dinaar, Dirham, Qateefah (thick soft cloth), and Khameesah (a garment), for if he is given, he is pleased; otherwise he is dissatisfied." [242]

Allaah تعالى condemns those who make *Du`aa* solely for the pleasures of this *Dunyaa*:

﴿فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ﴾

{But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your Bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter} [243]

Instead, we are encouraged to supplicate for everything that is beneficial to us concerning our *Deen*, *Dunyaa*, and *Aakhirah*:

﴿وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾

{And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!"} [244]

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[241] Surah Tawbah (9): 58
[242] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (2886, 2887, 6435)
[243] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 200

The Prophet ﷺ often combined the three: Deen (religious affairs), Dunyaa (worldly affairs), and Aakhirah (matters concerning the Hereafter), in many other supplications as well.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that the most frequent supplication of the Prophet ﷺ was:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً، وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Rabbanaa aatinaa fid-dunyaa ḥasanah wa fi-l-aakhirati ḥasanah wa qinaa `adhaab-an-naar

"O Allaah, Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good, and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!" [245]

This sequence, *Deen*, *Dunyaa*, and *Aakhirah*, is also mentioned in the *Ḥadeeth* narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِيَ الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِي وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي وَاجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَاجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ

Allaahumma aṣliḥ lee deenee-ya-lladhee huwa `iṣmatu amree, wa aṣliḥ lee dunyaa-ya-llatee feehaa ma`aashee, wa aṣliḥ lee Aakhirati-llatee feehaa ma`aadee, waj `alil-hayaata ziyaadatan lee fee kulli khair, waj `alil-mauta raaḥatan lee min kulli sharr

"O Allaah, set straight my religious commitment, which safeguards my affairs. Make right for me my worldly matters, which You have made a means of my livelihood. Correct my Hereafter for me, (which is my ultimate destination and) to which I shall return. Make life a

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[244] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 201

[245] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (4522, 6389) and the wording is his, and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (26-2690, 27-2690)

means for me to increase in all that is good. And make my death a source of comfort, freeing me from every evil." [246]

C. Deen Is The Key To Success In This World And the Hereafter:

If a person remains steadfast in his religious duties, he will, by Allaah's permission, find success both in this world and the Hereafter. As Allaah تعالى states:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

{Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter)} [247]

However, without religious commitments, a person will not achieve goodness in this life or the Hereafter. As Allaah تعالى states:

﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ * قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَىٰ وَقَدْ كُنتُ بَصِيرًا * قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَا ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنسَىٰ﴾

{But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e., neither believes in this Quran nor acts on its orders, etc.) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.

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[246] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (71-2720)
[247] Surah al-Naḥl (16): 97

He will say: "O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)." (Allaah) will say: "Like this, Our Aayaat came unto you, but you disregarded them (i.e. you left them, did not think deeply in them, and you turned away from them), and so this Day, you will be neglected (in the Hellfire, away from Allaah's Mercy)"} [248]

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَوَّلُ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الصَّلَاةُ، فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ لَهُ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ

"The first thing for which a servant will be brought to account on the Day of Resurrection will be his *Ṣalaah*. If it is sound (or complete), then the rest of his deeds will be deemed sound for him, but if it is deficient (or corrupt), then the rest of his deeds will be deemed corrupt." [249]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ بِهِ الْعَبْدُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ صَلَاتُهُ، فَإِنْ صَلَحَتْ فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ وَأَنْجَحَ، وَإِنْ فَسَدَتْ فَقَدْ خَابَ وَخَسِرَ، فَإِنِ انْتَقَصَ مِنْ فَرِيضَتِهِ شَيْءٌ قَالَ الرَّبُّ تبارك وتعالى: {انْظُرُوا هَلْ لِعَبْدِي مِنْ تَطَوُّعٍ؟} فَيُكَمَّلَ بِهَا مَا انْتَقَصَ مِنَ الْفَرِيضَةِ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ سَائِرُ عَمَلِهِ عَلَى ذَلِكَ

"Indeed, the first deed by which a servant will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection is his *Ṣalaah*. If it is complete, he is successful and saved (from the punishment), but if it is corrupt, he has failed and lost. So if something is deficient in his obligatory (prayers), then the Lord عز وجل **will say: {Look! Are there any voluntary (prayers) for**

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[248] Surah Ṭaahaa (20): 124-126

[249] Al-Ṭabaraanee in al-Awsaṭ (1859), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" (authentic due to corroborating chains) by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (1358) and Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Jaami` (2573)

my servant?} So with these (optional prayers), what was deficient in his obligatory (prayers) will be completed. Then the rest of his deeds will be treated similarly." [250]

In another narration, the wording is:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا يُحَاسَبُ النَّاسُ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمُ الصَّلَاةُ يَقُولُ رَبُّنَا جَلَّ وَعَزَّ لِمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ: {انْظُرُوا فِي صَلَاةِ عَبْدِي أَتَمَّهَا أَمْ نَقَصَهَا؟} فَإِنْ كَانَتْ تَامَّةً كُتِبَتْ لَهُ تَامَّةً، وَإِنْ كَانَ انْتَقَصَ مِنْهَا شَيْئًا، قَالَ: انْظُرُوا هَلْ لِعَبْدِي مِنْ تَطَوُّعٍ؟ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ تَطَوُّعٌ، قَالَ: {أَتِمُّوا لِعَبْدِي فَرِيضَتَهُ مِنْ تَطَوُّعِهِ}، ثُمَّ تُؤْخَذُ الْأَعْمَالُ عَلَى ذَاكُمْ

"Out of all the deeds, the first thing about which the people will be called to account on the Day of Judgment is *al-Ṣalaah*. Our Lord عز وجل will say to the Angels, though He knows better: {Look into the prayer of My servant. Did he offer it perfectly or imperfectly?} If it is perfect, that will be recorded as perfect. If it is defective, He تعالى will say: {See if My servant offered some optional prayers?} If there are optional prayers to his credit, He تعالى will say: {Compensate the obligatory prayer by the optional prayer for My servant.} Then all the actions will be considered similarly." [251]

If we focus on the religious aspects of our lives, Allaah تعالى has assuredly promised to take care of our worldly affairs.

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[250] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (413), Sunan Ibn Maajah (1425), Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (465, 466, 467) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. A similar narration has been narrated from Tameem al-Daaree رضي الله عنه in Sunan Ibn Maajah (1426) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[251] Sunan Abu Dawood (864), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إن الله تعالى يقول: ﴿يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ، تَفَرَّغْ لِعِبَادَتِي، أَمْلَأْ صَدْرَكَ غِنًى، وَأَسُدَّ فَقْرَكَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ مَلَأْتُ صَدْرَكَ شُغْلًا، وَلَمْ أَسُدَّ فَقْرَكَ﴾

"**Allaah** تعالى **says: {O son of Aadam, devote yourself to My worship, and I will fill your heart with contentment and take care of your poverty. But if you do not do this, I will fill your heart with (worldly) concerns and will not take care of your poverty.}"** [252]

So, in this *Du`aa* on *al-Istikhaarah*, the Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of *Deen* over *Dunyaa*. This is because if something harms the *Deen*, it will adversely affect a person's *Dunyaa*, which will ultimately impact his *Aakhirah*, and Allaah knows best.

D. Do Not Neglect Your Share Of This World:

Allaah established the *Sharee`ah* to preserve five things:

فَقَدَ اتَّفَقَتِ الْأُمَّةُ – بَلْ سَائِرُ الْمِلَلِ – عَلَى أَنَّ الشَّرِيعَةَ وُضِعَتْ لِلْمُحَافَظَةِ عَلَى الضَّرُورِيَّاتِ الْخَمْسِ – وَهِيَ: الدِّينُ، وَالنَّفْسُ، وَالْعَقْلُ، وَالنَّسْلُ، وَالْمَالُ – وَعِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ الْأُمَّةِ كَالضَّرُورِيِّ

"The Muslim *Ummah* (community) has agreed, rather all religions have agreed, that *Sharee`ah* (of Allaah) was established to preserve the five necessities: Religion, Life, Intellect, Lineage, and Property. Knowledge of these necessities is considered essential by the Muslim Ummah." [253]

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[252] Musnad Ahmad (8696), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2466), Sunan Ibn Maajah (4107), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" (authentic due to corroborating chains) by Shaikh Al-Albaani, al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (1359). The wording is from Sunan Ibn Maajah

[253] See al-Muwaafaqaat of Al-Shaaṭibee (1-/31, 2/20, and 3/236)

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* and some of the Aḥaadeeth mentioned earlier, the Prophet ﷺ not only taught to pray for one's welfare of the *Deen* and *Aakhirah*, but also for *Dunya* as well.

When the people tried to advise Qaaroon and admonish him, they said to him:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ * وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

{His people said to him, "Do not exult; Allaah does not love the exultant. But seek, with what Allaah has given you - the Home of the Hereafter; and do not neglect your share of this world. And do good as Allaah has done good to you. And do not seek corruption in the land. Allaah does not like the seekers of corruption."} [254]

Be moderate in seeking the pleasure of this world, neither extreme nor negligent. Those who go into extreme are destroyed, as Allaah تعالى mentioned about Qaaroon in the Qur'aan. Some Aayaat and Aḥaadeeth have already been mentioned above, warning against pursuing excessive wealth.

Likewise, shunning oneself from what Allaah has made permissible also leads to destruction. One does not worship Allaah by punishing the soul, but rather, by controlling desires. Allaah تعالى did not give anyone authority to allow that which He تعالى has made forbidden, or forbid that which He تعالى has made permissible.

[254] Surah al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 76-77

Some of the early Christians innovated in their religion and tried to impose monasticism upon themselves, but they failed, as Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا﴾

{But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them, but (they sought it) only to please Allaah therewith, but that they did not observe it with the right observance.} [255]

And this serves as a refutation of the Sufis - those who attempted to reform religion and worship Allaah by corrupting the worldly order that Allaah has established. Self-mortification became widespread among them; they abstained from permissible things and made them forbidden for themselves.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ asking how the Prophet ﷺ worshiped (Allaah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said: "Where are we from the Prophet ﷺ as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said: "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said: "I will Fast throughout the year and will not break my fast." The third said: "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Messenger ﷺ came to them and said:

أَنْتُمُ الَّذِينَ قُلْتُمْ كَذَا وَكَذَا، أَمَا وَاللهِ إِنِّي لَأَخْشَاكُمْ لِلهِ وَأَتْقَاكُمْ لَهُ، لَكِنِّي أَصُومُ وَأُفْطِرُ، وَأُصَلِّي وَأَرْقُدُ، وَأَتَزَوَّجُ النِّسَاءَ، فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنْ سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي

"Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allaah, I am more submissive to Allaah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I Fast and

[255] Surah al-Ḥadeed (57): 27

break my fast, (I pray at night and) I do sleep (as well), and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my Sunnah (tradition in religion), is not from me (not one of my followers).” [256] [257]

The *Sharee`ah* requires the Believer to rectify both his religious and worldly affairs simultaneously. There is no contradiction between these two, just as there is no contradiction between *al-Taqwa* (piety) and *al-Zuhd* (asceticism), both of which are among the noblest acts of the heart.

E. The Narrator's Doubt:

In the *Ḥadeeth* of Jaabir رضي الله عنه, one of the narrators - who was uncertain - said: أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ (or the Prophet ﷺ said: **“My immediate and future affairs”**) – scholars have disagreed on its placement, offering several opinions: [258]

a. It is said to serve as a substitute for all three phrases in the narration – **“my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs”** – and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **“If You know that this matter is good for me in my immediate and future affairs.”**

b. It is said that this serves as a substitute for the last two phrases in the narration, and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **“If You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my immediate and future affairs.”**

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[256] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (5063) and the wording is his, and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (5-1401)

[257] Indeed a lot of people who imposed monasticism uponthemselves and forbade marriage upon themselves, fell into fornication, sodomy, homosexuality, pedophilia, and other evil.

[258] See Fatḥ al-Baaree (18/171)

c. It is also said that this serves as a substitute for the last phrase in the narration, and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **"If You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, my immediate and future affairs."**

But the phrases: **"my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs"** have been confirmed from the Aḥaadeeth of Jaabir, Abu Sa`eed, Ibn Mas`ood, and Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣaaree رضي الله عنهم أجمعين. So, these phrases take precedence over the doubtful ones.

17. "Then Please Ordain It, Make It Easy, And Bless Me In It"

And when the supplicant says:

فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ

"Then please decree it for me, make it easy for me to achieve, and also bless me in it."

He is asking Allaah تعالى for its ordainment, with ease and blessing, and without hardship and exhaustion. From this *Du`aa*, it becomes clear that in every good matter, a person needs goodness in three ways.

A. The Three Requests:

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, the supplicant is asking Allaah تعالى for three things:

a. Its Ordainment:

He is beseeching Allaah تعالى, having already affirmed that only Allaah تعالى possesses the Ability and the Power to fulfill his needs. As the Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما:

يَا غُلَامُ إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الأُمَّةَ لَوْ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ، وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ،

رُفِعَتِ الأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتْ الصُّحُفُ

"O young man! I shall teach you some words (of advice): Be mindful of Allaah, and Allaah will protect you. Be mindful of Allaah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask Allaah (alone); and if you seek help, seek help from Allaah (alone). And know that if the Ummah (nation) were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allaah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allaah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted, and the pages have dried." [259]

And he is asking Allaah تعالى that if there is any good in it regarding the *Deen*, *Dunyaa*, and *Aakhirah*, then grant it to him or give him the ability to act upon it. In this *Du`aa*, we are also taught to ask Allaah تعالى with determination that our request will be answered, unlike those who call upon Allaah with uncertainty and doubt about their supplications being answered, as the Prophet ﷺ has said.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ said:

إِذَا دَعَا أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَعْزِمِ الْمَسْأَلَةَ، وَلَا يَقُولَنَّ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ شِئْتَ فَأَعْطِنِي، فَإِنَّهُ لَا مُسْتَكْرِهَ لَهُ

"When any one of you supplicates to Allaah for something, he should ask with determination and should not say: "O Allaah! If You wish, give me", for nobody can compel Allaah to do something against His Will." [260]

[259] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2516) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee
[260] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6338) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (7-2678)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا يَقُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمُ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِي إِنْ شِئْتَ، لِيَعْزِمِ الْمَسْأَلَةَ فَإِنَّهُ لَا مُكْرِهَ لَهُ

"None of you should say: 'O Allaah, forgive me if You wish; O Allaah, be merciful to me if You wish,' but he should always appeal to Allaah with determination, for nobody can compel Allaah (to do something) against His Will." [261]

b. With Ease:

"Make it easy for me," meaning: "Simplify the means for me to reach my goal and eliminate any obstacles or barriers along the way." This is important because if goodness is hard to achieve, it will take time and effort, and the person may find it difficult and give up trying. For this reason, it is appropriate for him to say: "And make it easy for me."

Receiving is one thing, but when it comes with ease, it saves a whole lot of trouble and pain. Seeking ease in matters is part of the Sunnah of the Prophets and Messengers عليهم الصلاة والسلام, as long as it does not go against the *Sharee`ah*. As Moosaa عليه السلم said in his *Du`aa*:

﴿وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي﴾

{"And ease my task for me"} [262]

And the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ لا سَهْلَ إِلا مَا جَعَلْتَهُ سَهْلا، وَأَنْتَ تَجْعَلُ الْحَزْنَ إِذَا شِئْتَ سَهْلا

"O Allaah, there is no ease except in that which You have made easy, and You make difficulty, if You wish, easy." [263]

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[261] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6339) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (8-2679, 9-2679)
[262] Surah Taahaa (20): 26

And **`Aaishah** رضي الله عنها narrated:

ما خُيِّرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ إِلَّا أَخَذَ أَيْسَرَهُما ما لَمْ يَكُنْ إِثْمًا، فَإِنْ كانَ إِثْمًا كانَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسِ مِنْهُ

"Whenever the Prophet ﷺ was given an option between two things, he used to select the easier of the two as long as it was not sinful; but if it were sinful, he was the one who was the farthest from it amongst the people." [264]

The Prophet ﷺ sent Mu`aadh and Abu Moosaa to Yemen, telling them:

يَسِّرَا وَلاَ تُعَسِّرَا، وَبَشِّرَا وَلاَ تُنَفِّرَا، وَتَطَاوَعَا وَلاَ تَخْتَلِفَا

"(You two), treat the people with ease and don't be hard on them; give them glad tidings and do not make them run away (from Islaam); love each other, and don't differ." [265]

The importance of obtaining something effortlessly is likened to the command of Allaah تعالى for the fire to be cool and peaceful for Ibraaheem عليه السلام:

﴿قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾

{We (Allaah) said: "O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Ibraaheem."} [266]

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[263] Ṣaḥeeḥ Ibn Ḥibbaan (986), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (2886), and said: "It is as per the condition of (Imaam) Muslim". And also graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh Muqbil in Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Musnad (73)

[264] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3560, 6126, 6786) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (5752, 5754)

[265] Reported on the authority of Abu Burda from his father, and the wordings are from his narration, and also reported on the authority of Anas Bin Maalik رضي الله عنه, Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (69, 3038, 4341, 4344, 6124, 6125, 7172) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (4297, 4298, 4300)

[266] Surah al-Anbiyaa' (21): 69

The *Mufassireen* (exegetists) said: **"Had not Allaah تعالى commanded the fire to be safe for Ibraaheem عليه السلام, its coolness would have harmed him"**, meaning that both the coolness and the safety were equally important.

Similarly, receiving something with ease is just as important because there are men who, when faced with difficulties and challenges, abandon their faith or become negligent, as Allaah تعالى described them, saying:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرْفٍ ۖ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ ۖ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةٌ انقَلَبَ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ﴾

"And among mankind is he who worships Allaah as it were, upon the very edge (i.e., in doubt); if good befalls him, he is content therewith; but if a trial befalls him, he turns back on his face (i.e., reverts to disbelief after embracing Islaam). He loses both this world and the Hereafter. That is the evident loss." [267]

Moreover, the importance of seeking ease, especially in religious matters, has been clearly explained by the Prophet ﷺ:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ، وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا، وَأَبْشِرُوا، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدُّلْجَةِ

"Religion is very easy, and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So do not be extremists, but strive for near-perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded. And seek help (of Allaah) by worshipping

[267] Surah al-Hajj (22):11

in the mornings, the afternoons, and a portion of the last hours of the nights." [268]

The first step in seeking ease is to ask Allaah تعالى for it.

c. And Blessing:

And he prays to Allaah تعالى to bless him in it, because without divine blessing, the servant will not gain much benefit from the good.

***Al-Barakah* (البركة blessing)** refers to progress and growth, and it also means vast goodness that does not deplete.

***Al-Tabreek* (البتريك)** means making *Du`aa* for *Barakah*.

Blessing (البركة), whatever it is in - for instance, wealth - even if that wealth is limited, Allaah's blessing in it will make that wealth sufficient; and the more blessings there are, the more beneficial that wealth becomes. Similarly, the opposite is true: if wealth is devoid of blessing, then even a large amount will be of little use. There is no one except that he is in need of the blessings of Allaah; even the Prophets and Messengers عليهم الصلاة والسلام used to ask their Creator for it.

The Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate to Allaah to bestow blessings upon whatever He تعالى has given him:

وَبَارِكْ لِي فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَ

"And bless for me that which You have bestowed." [269]

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[268] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (39)

[269] Part of the *Du`aa* al-Qunoot as reported in Sunan Abu Dawood (1425), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (464), Ibn Maajah (1178), and al-Nasaa'ee (1745) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

Allaah's Messenger ﷺ also supplicated to Allaah to bless Anas رضي الله عنه in everything that He تعالى has given him.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: My mother said: O Allaah's Messenger! Anas is your servant, so please invoke Allaah for him." He ﷺ said:

اللَّهُمَّ أَكْثِرْ مَالَهُ وَوَلَدَهُ، وَبَارِكْ لَهُ فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَهُ

"O Allaah! Increase his wealth and children, and bestow Your Blessing on whatever You have given him." [270]

Anas رضي الله عنه added: **"This is why I am one of the richest among the *Anṣaar*, and my daughter Umainah (أُمَيْنَةَ) told me that when Al-Ḥajjaaj came to al-Baṣrah, more than 120 of my offspring (children and grandchildren) had been buried."** [271]

⅁. Another Miracle Of Invoking Blessing Of Allaah:

Jaabir رضي الله عنه narrated: We were digging (the trench) on the day of *al-Khandaq* (i.e., the Trench), and we came across a big solid rock. We went to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "Here is a rock appearing across the trench." He ﷺ said: **"I am coming down."** Then he got up, and a stone was tied to his belly, for we had not eaten anything for three days. So the Prophet ﷺ took the spade and struck the large, solid rock, and it became as soft as sand. I said: "O Allaah's Messenger ﷺ! Allow me to go home." (When the Prophet ﷺ allowed me) I said to my wife: "I saw the Prophet ﷺ in a state that I cannot treat lightly. Have you got something (for him) to eat?" She replied: "I have barley and a she goat." So I slaughtered the goat, and she ground the barley; then we put the meat in the earthenware cooking pot. My wife said: "Do not

[270] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1982, 6334, 6344, 6378, 6379, 6380, 6381) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim

[271] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1982)

disgrace me in front of Allaah's Messenger and those who are with him." Then I came to the Prophet ﷺ when the dough had become soft and fermented and (the meat in) the pot over the stone trivet had nearly been well-cooked, and said to him secretly: "I have got a little food prepared, so get up O Allaah's Messenger ﷺ, you and one or two men along with you (for the food)." The Prophet ﷺ asked: **"How much is that food?"** I told him about it. He ﷺ said: **"It is abundant and good. Tell your wife not to remove the earthenware pot from the fire and not to bake the bread till I come."** Then he ﷺ said (to all his companions): **"O people of the Trench! Jaabir has prepared a meal, so let us go."** So the Muhaajireen (i.e., the Emigrants) and the Anṣaar got up. When I came to my wife, I said: "Allaah's Mercy be upon you! The Prophet ﷺ came along with the Muhaajireen and the Anṣaar and those who were present with them." She said: "Did the Prophet ﷺ ask you (how much food you had)?" I replied: "Yes." Then she brought out to him (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) the dough, and he spat in it and invoked Allaah's Blessings in it. Then he proceeded towards our earthenware meat pot and spat into it, invoking Allaah to bless it. Then he said (to my wife): **"Call a lady to help you bake the bread, and keep on taking out scoops from your earthenware meat pot, and do not put it down from its fireplace."** Then the Prophet ﷺ said (to the people): **"Enter and do not throng."** The Prophet ﷺ started cutting the bread (into pieces) and put the cooked meat over it. He covered the earthenware pot and the oven whenever he took something out of them. He would give the food to his companions and take the meat out of the pot. He went on cutting the bread and scooping the meat (for his companions) till they all ate their fill. There were a thousand (who took their meals), and by Allaah, they all ate. When they went away, our earthenware pot was still bubbling (full of meat) as if it had not decreased, and our dough was still being baked as if nothing had been taken from it. Then the Prophet ﷺ said (to my wife): **"Eat and present to others as the people are struck with hunger."** [272]

[272] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (4101, 4102), the wording is the combination of these two narrations, Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (141-2039)

Similarly, when Allaah تعالى bestows blessings upon someone in their life and time, that individual can achieve in a short time what others may not accomplish even in a lifetime.

There are many other narrations in which the Prophet ﷺ taught people to invoke blessings on food, for newly married couples, and on various occasions.

Moreover, asking Allaah for blessings is also a means of protection from harm and the evil eye. [273]

[273] To read more on "*al-Barakah*", follow the link:
http://Ilm4all.blogspot.com/2012/11/al-barakah-blessings.html
Also, asking for blessings is also a way of protection from the evil eye:
http://Ilm4all.blogspot.com/2012/09/the-correct-words-to-prevent-evil-eye.html#uds-search-results

18. "If This Matter Is Harmful To Me In My Religion, My Worldly, And In The Hereafter"

And when the supplicant says:

وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي

"and if You know that this matter is harmful to me in my religion, my livelihood, and in the Hereafter"

He is seeking Allaah's Protection from what is harmful for him in regards to his *Deen*, his *Dunyaa*, and his *Aakhirah*.

A. Seeking Two Types Of Assistance:

In this *Du`aa*, the supplicant is asking Allaah تعالى for two types of help:

a. *Isti`aanah* (إستعانة)

b. *Istighaathah* (إستغاثة)

a. *Isti`aanah* (إستعانة):

The term *Isti`aanah* comes from the word *`Aon* (عون), which means to seek help in carrying out an action or accomplishing something good or to request a positive outcome. It beautifully captures the essence of reaching out for support when aiming for something beneficial:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

{You (Alone) we worship, and you (Alone) we ask for help} [274]

﴿وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ﴾

{And seek help through patience and prayer} [275]

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ﴾

{Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa} [276]

The Prophet ﷺ said:

وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ

"And if you seek help, then seek help from Allaah (alone)." [277]

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person seeks Allaah's help, saying: **"So decree it for me, and make it easy for me, and bless me in it."** This is *Isti`aanah*, i.e., seeking help for something good.

i. Types Of *Isti`aanah*:

1. *Isti`aanah* With Allaah (Seeking Help From Allaah):

This is the essence of *Tawḥeed*. This is the purest and most complete form, and an act of *Tawḥeed* (monotheism). Seeking help from Allaah alone in matters beyond human capacity is obligatory and an act of worship.

Example: Seeking strength through patience and prayer, asking for guidance, success, etc.

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[274] Surah al-Faatihah (1): 5
[275] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 45
[276] Surah al-Maaidah (5): 2
[277] Reference already preceded from the *Ḥadeeth* of Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما

2. *Isti`aanah* With Creation:

This is further divided into two categories:

a) Permissible Type:

Asking for help from others in things they are capable of. This is allowed if the person is capable and present, and one does not believe they are independent of Allaah.

Example: Seeking medical advice from a doctor, teaching, financial support, etc.

b) Impermissible/*Shirk*:

Asking for help in matters only Allaah can do. This is *Shirk* (associating partners with Allaah in worship).

Example: Seeking help from the dead, Jinn, or other creation in matters that only Allaah can control (e.g., forgiveness, divine intervention, asking for children, prosperity, etc.).

b. *Istighaathah* (إستغاثة):

The term *Istighaathah* comes from the word *Ghauth* (غوث). *Istighaathah* refers to seeking rescue or relief, especially in moments of dire need or distress. It refers to the act of seeking help in repelling evil, harm, and enemies, as well as anything that causes distress to a Believer:

Seeking help to ward off enemies:

﴿إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ﴾

{(Remember) when you sought the help of your Lord, and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the Angels, each behind the other (following one another) in succession."} [278]

The man from Moosa's عليه السلام tribe sought his help against their enemy:

﴿فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ﴾

{The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe} [279]

Beneficial rain is also called *Ghayth* because it prevents drought and brings life to the earth by Allaah's permission:

﴿ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ﴾

{"Then thereafter will come a year in which people will have abundant rain and in which they will press (wine and oil)."} [280]

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا﴾

{And He it is Who sends down the rain after they have despaired} [281]

And also, in the *Ḥadeeth*, when a man from the Companions came and complained to the Prophet ﷺ about the drought, the Prophet ﷺ raised his hands and said:

اللَّهُمَّ أَغِثْنَا، اللَّهُمَّ أَغِثْنَا، اللَّهُمَّ أَغِثْنَا

"O Allaah! Bless us with rain. O Allaah! Bless us with rain. O Allaah! Bless us with rain!" [282]

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[278] Surah al-Anfaal (8): 9
[279] Surah al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 15
[280] Surah Yusuf (12): 49
[281] Surah al-Shooraa (42): 28
[282] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1014) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (1955)

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person also seeks Allaah's help, saying: **"then keep it away from me and keep me away from it"**, this is *Istighaathah*, i.e., seeking help or protection from something harmful.

i. Types Of Istighaathah:

1. *Istighaathah* With Allaah Alone (Seeking Help From Allaah):

This is the highest form of *Tawḥeed*.

Example: Calling on Allaah during calamity, "O Allaah, help me!"

The supplication of Nooh عليه السلام is one example of *Istighaathah*:

﴿فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانتَصِرْ﴾

{So he invoked his Lord, "Indeed, I am overpowered, so help."} [283]

Another example: **`Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭaab** رضي الله عنه said: When it was the day on which the Battle of Badr was fought, the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ cast a glance at the Mushrikeen (infidels), and they were one thousand while his own Companions were three hundred and nineteen. The Prophet ﷺ turned (his face) towards the Qiblah. Then he ﷺ stretched his hands and began his supplication to his Lord:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْجِزْ لِي مَا وَعَدْتَنِي اللَّهُمَّ آتِ مَا وَعَدْتَنِي اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ تَهْلِكْ هَذِهِ الْعِصَابَةُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الإِسْلاَمِ لاَ تُعْبَدْ فِي الأَرْضِ

"O Allaah! Grant me what You have promised me, O Allaah! Give me what You have promised me. O Allaah! If this small band of Muslims is destroyed, You will not be worshiped on this earth."

[283] Surah al-Qamar (54): 10

He continued his supplication to his Lord, stretching his hands and facing the *Qiblah*, until his mantle slipped down from his shoulders. Then Abu Bakr came to him, picked up his mantle, and put it back on his shoulders. He (Abu Bakr) then embraced him from behind and said: "Prophet of Allaah, this prayer of yours to your Lord will suffice you, and He will fulfill for you what He has promised you." So Allaah تبارك وتعالى revealed (the Aayah):

﴿إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ﴾

{(Remember) when you sought the help of your Lord, and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the Angels, each behind the other (following one another) in succession."} [284]

The supplications of Ayyoob and Yunush عليهم السلام, as well as the supplications that are said during calamities, as reported in the authentic Sunnah, are a few examples of *Istighaathah*.

٢. *Istighaathah* With Creation:

This is further divided into two categories:

a) Permissible:

Seeking help from living beings in matters they are capable of. This is allowed if the person is capable and present.

Example: Asking a lifeguard for help in a drowning situation, or seeking assistance with lifting something heavy, or confronting an oppressor, etc.

﴿فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ﴾

[284] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (58-1763), and the Aayah is from Surah al-Anfaal (8): 9

{The man of his (Moosa's own) party asked him (Moosa) for help against his foe} [285]

b) Impermissible/*Shirk*:

Seeking help from the dead, Jinn, or Angels in matters only Allaah can control. Believing that someone other than Allaah has independent power to rescue or intervene. If one believes someone can rescue or intervene independently or without Allaah's permission, this is Major *Shirk*.

Example: Saying "O `Abdul Qaadir Jilaanee, save me!" This is Major *Shirk* as `Abdul Qaadir passed away centuries ago.

B. Istighaathah VS. Isti`aanah:

a. *Istighaathah*: A term typically used for supplications done in urgent, desperate situations.
b. *Isti`aanah*: A broader term for supplications done for seeking help, not necessarily in distress.
c. Although both involve seeking help, *Istighaathah* is more emotionally driven and contextually intense.

During *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, the person asks Allaah for guidance and help, hoping that He تعالى grants what is beneficial for him, while also asking Allaah's aid to keep away anything that might be harmful.

[285] Surah al-Qaṣaṣ (28): 15

19. "Then Keep It Away From Me And Keep Me Away From It"

And when the supplicant says:

فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ

"then keep it away from me and keep me away from it"

Meaning: In the Knowledge of Allaah, if the outcomes of what this person is trying to pursue are harmful, then he is asking Allaah تعالى to keep it away from him and keep him away from it. This serves as protection in both directions.

The *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* illustrates the dual aspect of seeking protection, requesting not only safety from harm but also guidance to avoid the paths that lead to it. This subtle yet meaningful distinction emphasizes the depth of its teaching.

A. True Protection From Harm Involves Two Movements:

a. Turning Harm Away From The Person:

This is Allaah's mercy shielding him from external trials.

b. Turning The Person Away From Harm:

This is Allaah guiding his heart, his choices, and his steps so that he doesn't even come close to anything that could corrupt or harm him.

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي meaning: (If it is harmful) keep that thing away from me so that it does not become easy for me to do it.

وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ meaning: and keep me away from it so that I won't think about it, and neither my soul (or desire) will try to pursue it." [286]

B. The Comprehensive Method Of Seeking Protection:

The method of seeking protection from evil and harm, as taught in *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, is the most comprehensive approach. The person is asking Allaah تعالى for dual protection:

a. Protection to keep harm away from him.
b. Protection to keep him away from harm.

Example: When a person says: "O Allaah! Protect me from falling into the water and protect the water from falling onto me," he is seeking protection in two ways. First, to avoid falling into the water, and second, to prevent the water from coming onto him, because in either case, he is going to get wet.

Likewise, when a person asks Allaah تعالى to keep harm away from him and himself away from harm, this represents a comprehensive approach to seeking protection. In either case, he will ultimately be the one facing the consequences.

The significance of this point can also be understood from the *Ḥadeeth* that in "*Khutbatul Haajah*," the Prophet ﷺ used to seek Allaah's protection by saying:

وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا، وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا

"We seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of our own souls and from (the evil consequences of) our bad deeds." [287]

[286] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/256)

C. Illustrative Example:

a. Example Of Turning Harm Away From A Person:

In Surah Yusuf, Allaah تعالى mentions how the wife of the `Azeez tried to seduce Yusuf عليه السلام:

﴿وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ﴾

{And indeed she did desire him} [288]

But before she could do anything, the `Azeez entered the house, and thus Allaah تعالى protected Yusuf عليه السلام from her harm.

b. Example Of Turning A Person Away From Harm:

Then Allaah تعالى then said about Yusuf عليه السلام:

﴿وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَن رَّأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ﴾

{and he would have inclined to her desire, had he not seen the evidence of his Lord} [289]

Allaah تعالى guided Yusuf عليه السلام, thus preventing him from sinning. This is Allaah guiding his heart, his choices, and steps so that he doesn't even come near immorality.

This is how Allaah تعالى protects the people, reminds and guides them, and keeps them away from evil deeds.

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[287] Sunan Ibn Maajah (1892, 1893); Sunan al-Tirmidhee (1105) and Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1404) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[288] Surah Yusuf (12): 24

[289] Surah Yusuf (12): 24

p. *Du`aa* Averts Hardships And Calamities:

The Ḥadeeth of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* also teaches that Allaah تعالى erases what He تعالى Wills and approves what He تعالى Wills, as evidenced by the statement: **"then keep it away from me and keep me away from it."** Turning away only occurs after it has been written and decreed.

In the Qur'aan, Allaah تعالى says:

﴿يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ ۖ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾

{Allaah abolishes whatever He Wills, and He affirms (whatever He Wills). And with Him is the Mother of the Book (al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfooẓh)} [290]

Salmaan al-Faarisee رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لا يَرُدُّ القَضاءَ إلّا الدُّعاءُ

"Nothing averts the Divine Decree except supplication." [291]

Two Types Of Qaḍhaa':

a. Qaḍhaa' Mubram:

Absolute Decrees and Preordainments that are irrevocable, unalterable, and final. As Allaah تعالى said:

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[290] Surah al-Ra`d (13): 39

[291] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2139), and graded as "Ḥasan li ghairihee" (Good due to corroborating narrations) by Shaikh al-Albaanee. Ibn Maajah also reported in his Sunan (90, 4022), from the narration of Thawbaan رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said:

وَلَا يَرُدُّ الْقَدَرَ إِلَّا الدُّعَاءُ

The meaning is same as above, and graded as "Ḥasan li ghairihee" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (154), and Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Targheeb (1639, 2489).

﴿وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا ۚ لَّا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

{And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His words, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.} [292]

Allaah تعالى also said:

﴿مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ﴾

{The Word (Decree) that comes from Me cannot be changed} [293]

`Ubaadah Ibn al-Saamit رضي الله عنه said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saying:

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللهُ تَعَالَى الْقَلَمَ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: ﴿اكْتُبْ﴾. قَالَ: رَبِّ، وَمَاذَا أَكْتُبُ؟ قَالَ: ﴿اكْتُبْ مَقَادِيرَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تَقُومَ السَّاعَةُ﴾

"The first thing Allaah تعالى created was the pen. He said to it: {Write.} It asked: What should I write, my Lord? He said: {Write down the destinies of all things until the Last Hour is established.}" [294]

`Abdullaah Ibn `Amr Ibn al-`Aaṣ رضي الله عنهما narrated: I heard the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ say:

كَتَبَ اللهُ مَقَادِيرَ الْخَلَائِقِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِخَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ

"Allaah decreed the destinies of the creatures fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth." [295]

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[292] Surah al-An`aam (6): 115
[293] Surah Qaaf (50): 29
[294] Sunan Abu Dawood (4700) and the wording is his, Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2155, 3319), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (133).
[295] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (16-2653) and Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2156)

`Abdullaah bin `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما narrated: One day, I was behind the Prophet, and he ﷺ said to me:

يَا غُلَامُ إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظْكَ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ، وَإِذَا اسْتَعَنْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الأُمَّةَ لَوْ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ، وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ،

رُفِعَتِ الأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتْ الصُّحُفُ

"O young man! I shall teach you some words (of advice): Be mindful of Allaah, and Allaah will protect you. Be mindful of Allaah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask Allaah (alone); and if you seek help, seek help from Allaah (alone). And know that if the Ummah (nation) were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allaah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allaah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted, and the pages have dried." [296]

ب. Qaḍhaa' Mu`allaq:

Conditional Decrees that may change based on the fulfillment of certain conditions. This is what is in the scrolls that are in the hands of the Angels. [297] It is said: "Write down the lifespan of so-and-so. If he

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[296] Sunan al-Tirmidhee, *Ḥadeeth* (2516), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh Al-Albaanee

[297] **`Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood** رضي الله عنه narrated: Allaah's Messenger ﷺ, the truthful and truly-inspired, said:

إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ يُجْمَعُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ ثُمَّ يَكُونُ مُضْغَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُ اللهُ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكًا بِأَرْبَعِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَيُكْتَبُ عَمَلُهُ وَأَجَلُهُ وَرِزْقُهُ وَشَقِيٌّ أَوْ سَعِيدٌ ثُمَّ

does not give charity, then it is such and such, and if he gives charity, then it is such and such." And in the Knowledge of Allaah and His Eternal Decree, the person will give charity, or he will not give charity. What is in al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfooẓh does not change, but what is in the scrolls with the Angel is affected by supplication and charity, because it is conditional upon them. [298] And this is what is meant by the statement of Allaah تبارك وتعالى:

﴿لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ * يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ ۖ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾

يُنْفَخُ فِيهِ الرُّوحُ فَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلَّا ذِرَاعٌ فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ فَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ. وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلَّا ذِرَاعٌ فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ فَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَدْخُلُ النَّارَ

"Each one of you collected in the womb of his mother for forty days, and then turns into a clot for an equal period (of forty days) and turns into a piece of flesh for a similar period (of forty days) and then Allaah sends an Angel and orders him to write four things, i.e., his provision, his age, and whether he will be of the wretched or the blessed (in the Hereafter). Then the soul is breathed into him. And by Allaah, a person among you (or a man) may do deeds of the people of the Fire till there is only a cubit or an arm-breadth distance between him and the Fire, but then that writing (which Allaah has ordered the angel to write) precedes, and he does the deeds of the people of Paradise and enters it; and a man may do the deeds of the people of Paradise till there is only a cubit or two between him and Paradise, and then that writing precedes and he does the deeds of the people of the Fire and enters it." [Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (3208, 3332, 6594) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (6-2645)]

[298] **Salmaan al-Faarisee** رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَا يَرُدُّ القَضَاءَ إِلَّا الدُّعَاءُ، وَلَا يَزِيدُ فِي العُمْرِ إِلَّا البِرُّ

"Nothing averts the Divine Decree except supplication, and nothing increases the life-span except righteousness." [Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2139), and graded as "Ḥasan li ghairihee" (Good due to corroborating narrations) by Shaikh al-Albaanee]

{(For) each and every matter there is a Decree (from Allaah). Allaah abolishes whatever He Wills, and He affirms (whatever He Wills). And with Him is the Mother of the Book (al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfooẓh)} [299]

Shaikh al-Fawzaan حفظه الله said:

"This means that supplication is a means of attaining good, and that there are things predestined and linked to Asbaab (causes). If the cause is fulfilled, the predestined thing occurs, and if the cause is not fulfilled, it does not occur. So, if a Muslim supplicates to his Lord, he will receive good, and if he does not supplicate, evil may befall him. Similarly, Allaah has made maintaining kinship ties a cause of longevity and severing kinship ties a cause of its opposite. And Allaah knows best." [300]

E. Keep Supplicating:

In this *Ḥadeeth*, there is guidance to frequently supplicate and beseech Allaah in all circumstances. Sometimes a person seeks Allaah's protection and requests Him to remove harm. Sometimes Allaah removes the harm from the individual because of his supplication, even if the person did not specifically request it. This is further explained in the *Ḥadeeth* where the Prophet ﷺ said that *Du`aa* is answered in one of three ways:

Abu Sa`eed al-Khuḍhree رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو، لَيْسَ بِإِثْمٍ وَلَا بِقَطِيعَةِ رَحِمٍ إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ إِحْدَى ثَلَاثٍ: إِمَّا أَنْ يُعَجِّلَ لَهُ دَعْوَتَهُ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يَدَّخِرَهَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يَدْفَعَ عَنْهُ مِنَ السُّوءِ مِثْلَهَا قال: إذا نُكْثِرُ؟ قال: الله أكثر

[299] Surah al-Ra`d (13): 38-39

[300] From Shaikh al-Fawzaan's official website 6065

"There is no Muslim who offers a supplication - as long as he does not supplicate for something sinful or for severing the ties of kinship - except that Allaah will give him one of three things in return for it: either He will hasten for him what he asked for, or He will store it (the reward for it) up for him in the Hereafter, or He will avert from him an equivalent evil." They (the Companions) said: "Then shall we (not) supplicate more?" He ﷺ said: **"Allaah is more generous."** [301] [302]

As for receiving what a person supplicated for, or seeing his *Du`aa* materialize, then it is not necessary that it will happen in this life. Perhaps, Allaah تعالى may answer his supplication and give him what he requested, or maybe He تعالى may deny it. If He سبحانه وتعالى were to deny it, then one of the two will surely happen: either Allaah تعالى will avert or remove from him an equivalent evil, or He تعالى will store it for him for the Hereafter. And there is no doubt that if Allaah تعالى stored the *Du`aa* for the Hereafter, then it is indeed a great favor and honor from Allaah because on the Day of Judgment, a person will be in most need of receiving the favors and goodness from Allaah than he has ever before, and he will be in most need of what will be beneficial for him.

[301] Al-Adab al-Mufrad of al-Imaam al-Bukhaaree (710) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. Musnad Ahmad (11133) and graded as "Ḥasan-Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Targheeb (1633). Similar has been reported from Abu Hurairah Al-Adab al-Mufrad (711)

[302] One can read the explanation of this *Ḥadeeth* from the following link:
Ilm4all: Explanation of the Hadeeth: The *Du`aa* is answered in one of the three ways

20. "And Ordain For Me Whatever Is Good For Me"

And when the supplicant says:

وَاقْدُرْ لِي الخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ

"and ordain for me whatever is good for me"

He is asking Allaah تعالى to ordain for him whatever He تعالى views as good for him. Sometimes, the good (*Khair*) is in giving, and sometimes, the good (*Khair*) is in withholding. [303]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"Meaning: wherever the *Khair* (goodness) is, guide me towards it, whether it is this thing or something else." [304]

A. Become The Khair To Receive The Khair:

If you want the *Khair* (riches of this world), then be the *Khair* that Allaah wants from you, and He تعالى will give you *Khair* better than you imagined, as Allaah تعالى says:

﴿إِن يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا أُخِذَ مِنكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ﴾

{If Allaah knows any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, and Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful} [305]

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[303] This was explained further in Chapter (11) of this book

[304] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/256)

[305] Surah al-Anfaal (8): 70

{If Allaah knows any good in your hearts}, meaning: Islaam, purity of Faith (*Imaan*), sincerity in action, and free from *Shirk*.

Whoever wishes Allaah سبحانه وتعالى to answer his supplications must first demonstrate active obedience to Him, as Allaah تعالى said:

﴿وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

{And when My servants ask you, (O Muhammad ﷺ), concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me (by obedience) and believe in Me that they may be (rightly) guided.} [306]

{So let them respond to Me}: This phrase is a call to action, not just making *Du`aa*, but by living in obedience to Allaah. *Du`aa* is not just about asking; it's also about responding to Allaah through obedience and trust.

⅋. *Du`aa Al-Istikhaarah* Is A Prime Example Of Worship, Humility, And Tawakkul:

We are in no position to demand. We are merely seekers of grace (*Faḍhl*) from Allaah. The more one understands this, the more his heart will submit to Allaah in all humility, and *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is a perfect example, explaining the *Ḥadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ when he said:

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ العِبَادَةُ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ: ﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ﴾

[306] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 186

"Supplication (*Du`aa*) is itself the worship", he ﷺ then recited: **{And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship (i.e., do not invoke Me) they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!"}** [307]

As previously mentioned, through *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person worships Allaah, relies (*Tawakkul*) on His decisions, and affirms His تعالى complete Knowledge of all things and His perfect Command over them, His Wisdom, and His Justice. The supplicant also acknowledges his own weaknesses, imperfect knowledge, limitations, and shortcomings.

Thus, considering all this, the supplicant is imploring Allaah تعالى to bestow upon him whatever He تعالى considers beneficial, even if the supplicant doesn't understand the wisdom behind it.

C. Beseeching Allaah For Unrestricted Khair:

In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, وَاقْدُرْ لِي الخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ (**"and ordain for me whatever is good for me"**) and also in the *Du`aa* رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً **{Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good}**,[308] both of these supplications share a similar meaning. In both instances, the supplicant is asking Allaah تبارك وتعالى for what is truly beneficial, acknowledging that Allaah's perspective of what is good is superior to his own.

Through these two supplications, the supplicant acknowledges that goodness is not confined to what is visible or desired, but may lie in unexpected places.

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[307] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2969, 3247, 3371, 3372), Sunan Abu Dawood (1479), and Sunan Ibn Maajah (3828) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The verse is from Surah Ghaafir (40): 60

[308] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 201

The phrase حَيْثُ كَانَ (**"wherever it may be"**) is linguistically powerful; it removes all conditions, preferences, and expectations.

The word حَسَنَةً is open-ended, encompassing all forms of goodness: good health, lawful wealth, peace, righteous spouse, beneficial knowledge, etc.

The phrase وَاقْدُرْ لِي is a request to Allaah not just to reveal the *Khair*, but also to decree it.

This is the moment when a person's humility and his trust (*Tawakkul*) in Allaah come together to accept the Divine Will of *al-Ḥakeem* (the All-Wise). The supplicant is not asking for what he thinks is good, but for what Allaah knows is good. It's a subtle but profound shift from desire-based prayer to wisdom-based surrender.

In both these *Du`aa*, the essence is humility, recognizing the limitations of human understanding and the perfection of Allaah's Will. These supplications reflect a Believer's deep awareness that what may seem good or bad to him may not truly be so, and that Allaah knows best what will lead to benefit in this life and the next.

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

{And Allaah Knows, while you do not know} [309]

[309] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 216

21. "And Make Me Pleased With It"

And when the supplicant says:

ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ

"and make me pleased with it." [310]

He is requesting Allaah تعالى to grant him contentment and satisfaction with the choices He تعالى makes for him.

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله stated:
"Meaning: allow me to be content with it, without regret or sadness afterwards." [311]

Ultimately, the supplicant prays to Allaah تعالى, seeking contentment with whatever choice is made for him. If Allaah تعالى grants his desires, he feels fulfilled and does not feel the need to seek more from others. In contrast, if He تعالى withholds it, then his heart no longer feels attached to that thing.

A. Sufficing With What Has Been Decreed:

"Make me pleased with it." There are two aspects to understand this:

a. When A Person Receives What He Supplicated For:

The meaning here then becomes: "Make me content and satisfied so that I will never regret asking for it or be sorry that it happened

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[310] In other narrations of al-Bukhaaree, the wording is: ثُمَّ رَضِّنِي بِهِ, but the meaning is the same.
[311] Sharḥ Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen (4/256)

because, at the time of supplication, this is what I desired, but I do not know how it will turn out."

b. When Allaah Decrees Something Else:

The meaning here would then become: "O Allaah! Make me content with what You have decreed." Sometimes, the servant is unaware that what Allaah has decreed for him is good. So, if he is not pleased with what Allaah has decreed for him, his soul will stay attached to its original desire from which Allaah has diverted him. His soul will stay attached to it, and its life will be corrupted by its lack of contentment with the new good that has been written for it. For this reason, the servant seeks contentment.

ß. Sufficing With The Lawful Means:

Beseeching through His Grace (*Faḍhl*) is also reported in another *Ḥadeeth*.

**`Alee** رضي الله عنه narrated that a *Mukaatab* [312] came to him and said: "Indeed, I am not capable of my *Kitaabah*, [313] so help me." He (`Alee) said: "Should I not teach you words that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ taught me? If you had a debt upon you similar to the mountain of *Ṣeer*, [314] Allaah would pay it on your behalf." He (`Alee) said: "Say:

اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِي بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ، وَأَغْنِنِي بِفَضْلِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ

Allaahummak-finee biḥalaalika `an ḥaraamika, wa aghninee bi faḍhlika `amman siwaak

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[312] *Mukaatab*. i.e., referring to a slave who has an agreement (*Kitaabah*) with his master to buy his freedom, where the slave agrees to pay a specified amount of money to the master. See Tuḥfatul Aḥwadhee.

[313] The *Kitaabah* is the agreement for an amount of money as a price for the slave's freedom. This contract can be written or verbal.

[314] *Ṣeer* (also known as *Ṣabeer* and *Ṣibr*) is among the highest mountains in the Yemen and Arabian Peninsula.

O Allaah, suffice me with Your lawful against Your prohibited, and make me, by Your Grace, independent of all others besides You." [315]

Meaning And Reflections:

a. "Suffice Me With Your Lawful Against Your Prohibited":

i. Asking Allaah to make lawful (*Ḥalaal*) things enough so that one never feels drawn to unlawful (*Ḥaraam*) things.

ii. It is both a request for contentment and protection from temptation.

iii. The lawful (*Ḥalaal*) here can be in wealth, sustenance, relationships, and opportunities.

b. "Make Me, By Your Grace, Independent Of All Others Besides You":

i. True richness (*Ghinaa*) isn't measured by how much wealth or possessions one has, but by the freedom from depending on creation.

ii. This is a prayer to Allaah, asking Him to fulfill your needs in such a way that makes you depend solely on Him, and not on people, their praise or approval, favors, or any worldly attachments.

C. Levels Of Patience:

When facing hardships and disasters, people respond differently depending on their level of Faith (*Imaan*) and the depth of their understanding of Divine Wisdom.

a. Impatience (الجزع *al-Jaz`*):

Actions that depict impatience include lamenting, wailing, complaining, and getting angry.

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[315] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3563) and graded as "*Ḥasan*" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (266)

During a calamity, actions such as raising one's voice in lament, slapping the cheeks, tearing clothes, or complaining to others indicate dissatisfaction with Allaah's Decree.

`Abdullaah رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ ضَرَبَ الخُدُودَ، وَشَقَّ الجُيُوبَ، وَدَعا بِدَعْوَى الجاهِلِيَّةِ

"He who slaps his cheeks, tears his clothes, and follows the ways and traditions of the Days of Ignorance (*Jaahiliyyah*) is not one of us." [316]

Abu Musa رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

أَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّنْ حَلَقَ وَسَلَقَ وَخَرَقَ

"I am free from the one who shaves his head, raises his voice in lamentation, or rips his garments." [317]

In another narration, **Abu Musa** رضي الله عنه said:

أَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا بَرِئَ مِنْهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ بَرِئَ مِنَ الصَّالِقَةِ وَالْحَالِقَةِ وَالشَّاقَّةِ

"I am innocent of those of whom Allaah's Messenger ﷺ was innocent. Allaah's Messenger ﷺ declared himself free of a woman who cries aloud (or slaps her cheek), who shaves her head, and who tears off her clothes (on the falling of a calamity)." [318]

People with weak Faith (*Imaan*) may feel overwhelmed, question Divine Justice, or fall into despair. Instead of turning to Allaah for help through patience and prayer, they try to cope with hardships by relying on worldly distractions (like music, intoxicants, illegal substances, etc.). They see the hardship as punishment or misfortune, not as a test or opportunity.

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[316] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1294, 1297, 1298, 3519) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (165-103)
[317] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (167-104)
[318] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1296) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (167-104)

b. Patience (الصبر *al-Sabr*):

Suppressing emotions while experiencing pain.

Patience is the ability to restrain oneself and avoid anger or frustration in the face of adversity or difficulty. It involves restraining the soul from discontent, the tongue from complaining, and the limbs from doing things that reflect discontent, such as pulling one's hair, tearing one's clothes, or throwing dirt on one's head, etc.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ passed by a woman who was weeping beside a grave. He ﷺ told her to fear Allaah and be patient. She did not recognize him and said: "Go away, for you have not been afflicted with a calamity like mine." When she was informed that he was the Prophet ﷺ, she was shocked (after realizing her mistake). So, she went to the house of the Prophet ﷺ, and there she did not find any guard at the door. Then she said to him ﷺ: "(Please pardon me for) I did not recognize you." He ﷺ said:

إِنَّ الصَّبْرَ عِنْدَ أَوَّلِ صَدْمَةٍ

"Verily, the patience is at the first stroke of a calamity." [319]

People with moderate Faith (*Imaan*) initially struggle but eventually turn to prayer, *Du`aa*, and patience. They begin to reflect on the wisdom behind the hardship. With reminders and support, they gradually accept and grow in resilience and *Tawakkul*.

c. Contentment (الرضا *al-Riḍhaa*):

Experiencing pain but remaining satisfied with the Decree.

Being content with Allaah's Decree and saying only what pleases Allaah تبارك وتعالى. It doesn't mean the pain disappears, but rather it brings a

[319] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1283, 1302, 7154) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (14-926)

sense of tranquility, where the heart remains peaceful amid suffering, trusting that Allaah's Wisdom exceeds our comprehension.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلاَءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلاَهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ

"Indeed, greater reward comes with greater trial. And indeed, when Allaah loves a people, He subjects them to trials, so whoever is content, then for him is pleasure (of Allaah), and whoever is discontent, then for him is wrath (of Allaah)." [320]

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: We accompanied Allaah's Messenger ﷺ to the blacksmith Abu Saif, who was the husband of the wet nurse of Ibraaheem (the son of the Prophet ﷺ). Allaah's Messenger ﷺ took Ibraaheem and kissed him, then smelled him. Later, we entered Abu Saif's house, and at that time, Ibraaheem was in his last breaths. The eyes of Allaah's Messenger ﷺ began to shed tears. `Abdul Raḥmaan bin `Auf said: O Allaah's Apostle, even you are weeping! He ﷺ said:

يَا ابْنَ عَوْفٍ، إِنَّهَا رَحْمَةٌ

"O Ibn `Auf, this is mercy."

Then he wept more and said:

إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ تَدْمَعُ، وَالْقَلْبَ يَحْزَنُ، وَلَا نَقُولُ إِلَّا مَا يَرْضَى رَبُّنَا، وَإِنَّا بِفِرَاقِكَ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ لَمَحْزُونُونَ

[320] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2396) and Sunan Ibn Maajah (4031) and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (146)

“The eyes are shedding tears, and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord, O Ibraaheem! Indeed, we are grieved by your separation.” [321]

Although the Prophet ﷺ endured the sorrow of losing his child, he ﷺ only spoke words that pleased his Lord.

The Prophet’s uncle **`Abbaas** رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

ذَاقَ طَعْمَ الإِيمَانِ، مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا وَبِالإِسْلَامِ دِينًا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولًا

“Whoever is pleased with Allaah as (his) Lord, and Islaam as (his) religion (i.e., code of life), and with Muhammad ﷺ as the Messenger (of Allaah), then he has tasted the sweetness of Faith (*Imaan*).” [322]

Those with deep *Imaan* and profound understanding - their first instinct is to say: “Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji`oon.” They recognize the trial as a means to draw closer to Allaah. They see calamity as a means of purification and elevation. They use the moment to increase worship and reflect deeply.

d. Gratitude (الشكر *al-Shukr*):

Praising Allaah in all circumstances and expressing gratitude to Allaah for the opportunity to reduce the sins and elevate one's status.

`Aaishah رضي الله عنها said: When the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ saw something he liked, he would say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بِنِعْمَتِهِ تَتِمُّ الصَّالِحَاتُ

Alhamdu lillaahil-ladhee bi ni`matihee tatimmuṣ-ṣaalihaat

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[321] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1303) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (62-2315)
[322] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (56-34)

"All praise is to Allaah by Whose grace good deeds are accomplished."

And if he saw something that he disliked, he would say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ

Alhamdu lillaahi `alaa kulli haal

"All praise is to Allaah in all circumstances." [323]

Instead of viewing hardship purely as punishment or misfortune, a Believer should perceive every difficulty as a means of purification and spiritual elevation. No thorn pricks a Believer without erasing some of his sins, and no hardship occurs except that it raises his rank in the Hereafter. So, a Believer should be grateful that Allaah is providing him with the opportunity to reach a higher level in Paradise.

Al-Sha`bee narrated that **al-Shuraih** said: "When I am afflicted with a calamity, I praise Allaah تعالى (by saying: Alhamdulillaah) four times for that:

a. I praise Allaah تعالى that He did not make the calamity more severe than that.
b. And I praise Him when He grants me to be patient about it.
c. And I praise Him when He guides me to say al-Istirjaa' (Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji`oon).
d. And I praise Him when He does not afflict me in my religion." [324]

[323] Sunan Ibn Maajah (3803) and graded as "Ḥasan li Ghairihee" (good due to supporting chain) by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (265)

[324] Siyar A`laam al-Nubalaa' (4/105).

Note: The most severe form of calamity is religious hardship, such as being prevented from fulfilling a religious duty or abandoning good deeds that a person performed regularly. In worldly matters, wealth and health fluctuate, but the loss of religion signals imminent ruin.

D. Scholars' Explanation Of The Different Levels Of Patience:

Al-Ḥaafiẓh Ibn Rajab رحمه الله said:

"The true difference between patience and contentment is that patience is the act of restraining oneself and avoiding anger or frustration when faced with pain. On the other hand, contentment allows the heart to expand and feel calm, even if the source of pain remains. Furthermore, contentment reduces the pain when the heart is filled with certainty (Yaqeen – that Allaah does not abandon His slaves) and awareness (that Allaah is Most Just and what has been decreed for him is good)." [325]

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله said:

"Patience is obligatory, while contentment and gratitude are recommended. When a calamity befalls you, there are three things: patience (*al-Sabr*), which is obligatory; contentment (*al-Riḍhaa*), which is a Sunnah; and gratitude (*al-Shukr*), and that is the best." [326]

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله also said:

"Patience is obligatory, contentment is a confirmed Sunnah, and impatience is prohibited. Impatience, wailing, tearing one's clothing, and slapping one's cheeks are all forbidden. Impatience is forbidden, patience is obligatory, and contentment is the sign of perfection.

There is another higher level, which is to view the calamity as a blessing, and he thanks Allaah for it. He is grateful, patient, pleased, and thankful. He perceives the calamity as a blessing, whether it is illness, poverty, loss of possessions, bodily affliction, or something similar. He sees it as a blessing and is grateful to Allaah for it. This gratitude is due to the outcome (which he hopes to atone for through this suffering), such as the expiation of sins, a reduction in transgressions, and great rewards. He considers it a blessing, remains

[325] Al-Jaami` al-`Uloom wal-Ḥikam (457)
[326] Majmoo` Fataawa Ibn Baaz (13/413)

patient, satisfied, and seeks reward from Allaah, and thanks Allaah for it. This is the higher level. And Allaah's help is sought." [327]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"Contentment means feeling reassured, with the heart staying peaceful about what Allaah عز وجل has decreed. He feels no psychological pain despite clearly disliking what happened to him, because no person likes to suffer. However, he does not feel any psychological pain. Rather, he says: "This is Allaah's Decree, and I am part of Allaah's عز وجل possession (meaning, Allaah owns him)," and he recognizes that Allaah has the right to do as He تعالى wishes with him, which brings him peace of mind.

This rank has been the subject of disagreement among scholars, with two opposing views: some argue it is obligatory, while others maintain it is recommended. The correct view is that it is recommended, and not obligatory, because it is difficult for many people.

The sign of contentment is that if you were to ask him: "Have you been affected by what Allaah has decreed upon you?" He would say: "No! Because I know that Allaah does not decree anything for me except that it is good for me. I am a believer."

Allaah, He does not decree anything but good for His believing servant." [328]

[327] From Shaikh Ibn Baaz's official website. Fatwa No. 11617

[328] Sharḥ al-`Aqeedah al-Safaariniyyah (1/370)

E. A Level Higher Than All This:

The highest level a person can achieve is when Allaah تبارك وتعالى is pleased with him. Anyone can claim to love Allaah and pretend to be pleased with Him. But what matters most is whether Allaah is pleased with him or not? Does Allaah love him or not?

When Allaah loves someone, He تعالى makes the remaining of the creation love him. When Allaah is pleased with someone, then He تعالى makes the rest of the creation to be pleased with him. When Allaah is pleased with someone, He تعالى grants them entry into Paradise:

﴿قَالَ اللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

{Allaah will say: "This is the Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness." For them are gardens (in Paradise) beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allaah being pleased with them, and they with Him. That is the great attainment.} [329]

And Allaah تعالى said about the Companions:

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَانٍ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

{And the first to embrace Islam of the Emigrants and the Anṣaar, and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allaah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has

[329] Surah al-Maaidah (5): 119

prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.} [330]

And similar Aayaat are also found in Surah al-Fatḥ [331] and Surah al-Bayyinah. [332]

F. Do Not Despair:

In this world, Allaah will test the individual; He will test his Faith (*Imaan*), his patience by delaying the response. The delay is an opportunity for one to increase in his worship (*`Ibaadah*), and to make a lot of *Du`aa* and *Adhkaar*, frequently and constantly. On the other hand, many people abandon supplication out of despair when they feel it is taking too long or when it conflicts with their desires. This indicates negative thoughts about Allaah or being dissatisfied with His decisions.

Ya`qoob عليه السلام advised his sons saying:

﴿وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

{"…and despair not of relief from Allaah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allaah except the disbelieving people."} [333]

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated: The Prophet ﷺ said:

يُسْتَجَابُ لِأَحَدِكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَعْجَلْ، يَقُولُ: دَعَوْتُ فَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لِي

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330 Surah al-Tawbah (9): 100
331 Surah al-Fatḥ (48): 18
332 Surah al-Bayyinah (98): 8
333 Surah Yusuf (12): 87

"The invocation of any one of you is granted (by Allaah) if he does not show impatience by saying: 'I invoked Allaah, but my request has not been granted.'" [334]

In another narration of Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim, it is:

لَا يَزَالُ يُسْتَجَابُ لِلْعَبْدِ مَا لَمْ يَدْعُ بِإِثْمٍ، أَوْ قَطِيعَةِ رَحِمٍ، مَا لَمْ يَسْتَعْجِلْ

قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ مَا الِاسْتِعْجَالُ؟ قَالَ: يَقُولُ: قَدْ دَعَوْتُ وَقَدْ دَعَوْتُ،

فَلَمْ أَرَ يَسْتَجِيبُ لِي فَيَسْتَحْسِرُ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ، وَيَدَعُ الدُّعَاءَ

"The supplication of a slave continues to be granted as long as he does not supplicate for a sinful thing or for something that would cut off the ties of kinship, and he does not become impatient." It was said: "O Messenger of Allaah! What does growing impatient mean?" He ﷺ said: **"It is when one says: 'I supplicated again and again, but I do not think that my prayers will be answered.' Then he becomes frustrated and abandons supplication."** [335]

After making a thoughtful decision, a person must embrace his choice without regret. For instance, if someone prays *al-Istikhaarah* before applying for a job, he shouldn't look back with disappointment after starting at the organization, even if things don't go exactly as planned. Instead, he should appreciate that having a job is a positive step and is far better than being unemployed; who knows what excellent opportunities might unfold from this experience?

[334] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6340) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (90-2735)
[335] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (92-2735)

G. Trusting Divine Decree: A Path to Inner Peace:

A major benefit of performing *al-Istikhaarah* is the profound feeling of peace and contentment it brings, regardless of the outcome. Even if the outcome is not what was expected, the person remains content with what Allaah has decreed, as he understands that it is ultimately the best for them. Knowing that whatever happens is what Allaah considers best helps lessen stress and worry.

﴿قُل لَّن يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

{Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allaah has ordained for us. He is our Maulaa (Lord, Helper and Protector)." And in Allaah let the believers put their trust.} [336]

The Prophet ﷺ taught us to seek guidance through *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*. When a matter is not decreed for a person, he is encouraged to detach his heart from it to achieve a happier life and greater peace of mind. [337] This isn't just a spiritual exercise; it's a practical remedy for emotional turmoil. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* ends by asking Allaah تبارك وتعالى to make one content with whatever is decreed; a calm heart that isn't trapped in the "what ifs" of life.

This *Du`aa* provides a practical, emotional, and spiritual approach: seek Allaah's guidance, accept the outcome, and train one's heart to let go when things don't go as planned.

In a world filled with choices, ambitions, and comparisons, many people experience regret or disappointment when things don't turn out as they hoped, whether it's a job, a relationship, or a dream. At times like these, one should remind oneself that what he missed was

[336] Surah al-Tawbah (9): 51

[337] As explained in Chapter (19), when a thing is not decreed or when it is harmful, a person seeks Allaah's protection from it and total detachment.

never meant to reach him, and what reached him was never meant to miss him.

Ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنهما narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to him:

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ

"And know that what has passed you by (and you have failed to attain) was not going to befall you, and what has befallen you was not going to pass you by." [338]

In another *Ḥadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ said:

فَتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ وَمَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ

"Know that whatever has befallen you, could not have passed you by; and whatever has passed you by, could not have befallen you." [339]

`Ubaadah Ibn al-Saamit رضي الله عنه said to his son:

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَجِدَ طَعْمَ حَقِيقَةِ الإِيمَانِ حَتَّى تَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ وَمَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ

"Son! You will not get the taste of the reality of Faith until you know that what has come to you could not miss you, and that what has missed you could not come to you." [340]

a. Inner peace comes not from getting what one wants, but from trusting that Allaah knows what's best, even when it's not what one expected.

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[338] Mustadrak al-Ḥaakim (6304), and it is "Ḥasan". This is part of the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ to Ibn `Abbaas

[339] Sunan Ibn Maajah (77), Sunan Abu Dawood (4699), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. This has been reported from Zaid Ibn Thaabit, Ubayy Ibn Ka`b, `Abdullaah Ibn Mas`ood, and Ḥudhaifah رضي الله عنهم

[340] Sunan Abu Dawood (4700) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

b. Inner peace comes from letting go of the emotional attachment.

c. Inner peace comes from reminding oneself that perhaps the thing he is chasing is bad for him (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:216), and therefore, detaching himself from it.

d. Inner peace comes by replacing regret with gratitude (Shukr); thanking Allaah for His protection from what wasn't meant for him.

H. Never Regret After Doing *Al-Istikhaarah*:

It is considered bad etiquette to regret a decision after one has done *al-Istikhaarah*, saying: "I should not have done this" or "I should have done it in such-and-such way." This is all from Shaiṭaan's work, as it will lead a person to object to Allaah's Decree, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

الْمُؤْمِنُ الْقَوِيُّ خَيْرٌ وَأَحَبُّ إِلَى اللهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ الضَّعِيفِ، وَفِي كُلٍّ خَيْرٌ، احْرِصْ عَلَى مَا يَنْفَعُكَ، وَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللهِ وَلَا تَعْجِزْ، فَإِنْ أَصَابَكَ شَيءٌ فَلَا تَقُلْ: لَوْ أَنِّي فَعَلْتُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ:

"A strong believer is better and dearer to Allaah than a weak one, and there is good in everyone. Strive to seek that which will benefit you, seek the help of Allaah, and do not feel helpless. If you are afflicted in any way, do not say: "If I had taken this or that step, it would have resulted in such and such", but say only:

قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ، وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ

Qaddar-Allaahu, wa maa shaa'a fa`l

"Allaah has Decreed, and whatever He wills He does." The word "if" opens the gates for satanic thoughts." [341]

[341] From the *Ḥadeeth* of Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه. Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (34-2664) and Sunan Ibn Maajah (79, 4168). In Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim, the wording is:

It is not a condition that everything will turn out well for an individual in this world. It is not possible that the earth will always be a carpet of roses and flowers for a Believer. [342] Some things may not meet one's satisfaction in this life, but these things could be in his best interest in the Hereafter.

Makḥool narrated that Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنه said:

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ يَسْتَخِيرَ اللَّهَ تبارك وتعالى فَيَخْتَارُ لَهُ، فَيَسْخَطُ عَلَى رَبِّهِ عز وجل، فَلَا يَلْبَثُ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ فِي الْعَاقِبَةِ، فَإِذَا هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ

"A man performs *al-Istikhaarah*, seeking guidance from Allaah تبارك وتعالى. So, Allaah تعالى chooses for him, but the person (initially) becomes angry with his Lord عز وجل. However, he soon observes the results and realizes (that what his Lord selected) was better for him." [343]

Therefore, be happy and appreciative of what you receive, and find satisfaction in Allaah's decision. Unlike the lovers of wealth, as mentioned earlier, they are only satisfied when they receive what they desire, but become displeased when it is not granted. The Jews exemplify this behavior. They were provided food in the form of *al-Manna* and *al-Salwa*, which descended from the Heavens for them, yet they remained discontented.

قَدَرُ اللهِ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ

(Qadar-ullaahi, wa maa shaa'a fa`l) **"It is the Decree of Allaah, and what He wills He does."**

[342] The Prophet ﷺ said:

الدُّنْيَا سِجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَجَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ

"The world is a prison for the believer and Paradise for the disbeliever" [Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (1-2956)

[343] al-Zuhd of Ibn al-Mubaarak (1740)

Be satisfied with whatever Allaah gives and be patient when He تعالى withholds from you. For this is the test of one's Faith (*Imaan*).

Human beings are hasty creatures. If Allaah were to give everyone everything they want, they would still not be satisfied. The greed to want more never diminishes, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَوْ أَنَّ ابْنَ آدَمَ أُعْطِيَ وَادِيًا مَلأً مِنْ ذَهَبٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ ثَانِيًا، وَلَوْ أُعْطِيَ ثَانِيًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ ثَالِثًا، وَلَا يَسُدُّ جَوْفَ ابْنِ آدَمَ إِلَّا التُّرَابُ

"If the son of Aadam were given a valley full of gold, he would love to have a second one; and if he were given the second one, he would love to have a third, for nothing fills the belly of the son of Aadam except dust." [344]

So, one should be satisfied with what Allaah gives him in this world! He should sincerely acknowledge Allaah's favors and blessings, and thank Him for them, and in return, He تعالى will make him pleased and satisfied on the Day of Judgment. As Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَىٰ﴾

{And he is going to be pleased (when he enters paradise)} [345]

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

يُؤْتَى يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِأَنْعَمِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ، فَيُقَالُ: اغْمِسُوهُ فِي النَّارِ غَمْسَةً، فَيُغْمَسُ فِيهَا، ثُمَّ يُخْرَجُ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: أَيْ فُلَانُ! هَلْ أَصَابَكَ نَعِيمٌ قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا، مَا أَصَابَنِي نَعِيمٌ قَطُّ، وَيُؤْتَى بِأَشَدِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ضُرًّا وَبَلَاءً، فَيُقَالُ: اغْمِسُوهُ

[344] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (6438, 6439) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (1048)
[345] Surah al-Layl (92): 21

غَمْسَةً فِي الْجَنَّةِ، فَيُغْمَسُ فِيهَا غَمْسَةً، فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: أَيْ فُلَانُ! هَلْ أَصَابَكَ ضُرٌّ قَطُّ أَوْ بَلَاءٌ؟ فيَقُولُ: لا، مَا أَصَابَنِي قَطُّ ضُرٌّ وَلَا بَلَاءٌ

"On the Day of Resurrection, the disbeliever who lived the most luxuriously will be brought, and it will be said: 'Dip him once in Hell.' So he will be dipped in it, then it will be said to him: 'O so-and-so, have you ever enjoyed any pleasure?' He will say: 'No, I have never enjoyed any pleasure.' Then the Believer who suffered the most hardship and trouble will be brought, and it will be said: 'Dip him once in Paradise.' So he will be dipped in it, and it will be said to him: 'O so-and-so, have you ever suffered any hardship or trouble?' He will say: 'No, I have never suffered any hardship or trouble.'" [346]

The secret is that one's heart should not be attached to the matter in question, because that will result in a person becoming restless. [347] Being pleased with something means that one's heart is content with the decree of Allaah. So, there should be no regrets after performing *al-Istikhaarah*. Whatever course of action we take, there is *Khair* (goodness), as long as we are Believers.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

عَجَبًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ، لَا يَقْضِي اللهُ لَهُ شَيْئًا إِلَّا كَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ

"Remarkable (is the case of) the Believer. There is nothing decreed for him from Allaah except that it is good for him." [348]

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[346] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (55-2807) and Sunan Ibn Maajah (4321), and the wording is his, and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

[347] Reflection: The only bond truly safe for a human heart is its attachment to Allaah. All other attachments are likely to lead to disappointment. The more a person's heart is connected to someone or something, the more pain and setbacks he will face, whether through loss, betrayal, ungratefulness, disrespect, neglect, or the absence of mutual care and concern.

[348] Musnad of Imaam Ahmad (12160, 12906, 20282) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee in al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (148)

Suhaib Ibn Sinaan رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ said:

عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَّاءُ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَّاءُ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ

"How wonderful is the case of a believer; for all his affairs are good for him, and this applies only to a believer. If something good happens to him, he is thankful for it, and that is good for him; if something bad happens to him, he bears it with patience, and that is good for him." [349]

We ask Allaah سبحانه وتعالى
that He guides us towards beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, for He تعالى **is *Kareem*, *Jawwaad*.**

[349] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (64-2999)

Summary

Overview

1. The *Ḥadeeth of Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* demonstrates the Prophet's ﷺ compassion for his Ummah, showing how he teaches them what benefits them, both in their religion and worldly life.

2. The *Ḥadeeth* teaches that seeking guidance from Allaah is prescribed when a person is considering a matter, as he ﷺ said in the Ḥadeeth: **"When he is considering…"**

3. The *Ḥadeeth*, by its meaning, teaches that seeking guidance is not prescribed when thoughts and ideas come to mind, which almost no one is immune to, as has been narrated in another narration that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"If one of you wants to do something…"**

The absolute concern in the first narration: **"When he is considering…"** is clarified by the will in the second narration: **"If one of you wants to do something…"**, and fleeting thoughts are excluded from this. For this reason, it has not been established that the Prophet ﷺ used to seek guidance regarding everything that occurred to him, but rather seeking guidance is prescribed in matters that necessitate it.

4. Seeking guidance (*al-Istikhaarah*) in the *Ḥadeeth* encompasses two situations:

a. The first scenario: Seeking what is best in the matter, and this is derived from its linguistic meaning. Linguistic meaning of *al-Istikhaarah*: **"Seeking good in something."** [350]

Therefore, anyone who hesitates and wants to seek what is best in a matter should perform *al-Istikhaarah*, because this is the implication of

[350] Lisaan al-`Arab (5/351)

its linguistic meaning, and it is also supported by the Prophet's ﷺ statement: **"If he is inclined,"** and inclination implies hesitation.

b. The second scenario: It also includes if a person wants to do something, as the Prophet ﷺ said in another narration: **"If one of you intends."**

Therefore, anyone who wants to do something should also seek guidance from Allaah before doing it, and the difference between the two cases becomes apparent in the case of hesitation and its absence.

The first scenario: He is hesitant to do something because he doesn't know whether it is beneficial for him or not.

The second scenario: He is not hesitant about doing something, but he still wants to seek guidance through prayer.

The *Ḥadeeth* teaches the importance of seeking Allaah's guidance in both cases, and Allaah knows best.

5. Regarding matters that are *Waajib* (obligatory) or *Mustaḥabb* (liked or encouraged), there is no need for performing *al-Istikhaarah* to decide whether an individual should do them.

Example: Performing *al-Hajj* is obligatory once in a lifetime for every able Muslim. So, a person who fulfills the conditions cannot supplicate, saying: "O Allaah! Should I perform *al-Hajj* or not?", but he is allowed to supplicate, saying: "O Allaah! Should I perform *al-Hajj* this year or next year?"

6. The *Ḥadeeth* links *al-Istikhaarah* (seeking guidance from Allaah) to being preoccupied with thoughts and having the intention to do something. It teaches the importance of ignoring all other thoughts when a person has no intention or will to act on them.

This teaches Muslims not to be swayed by every fleeting thought or idea that comes to mind. That's why performing *al-Istikhaarah* is not recommended for them. How much anxiety, wasted time, and mental distraction these thoughts cause! If a person were to ignore them, as the *Sharee`ah* advises, their religious and worldly affairs would remain secure.

7. The *Ḥadeeth*, in its wording, shows that the Prophet ﷺ taught the Companions the chapters of the Qur'aan, and they used these Surahs as benchmarks to compare other matters in terms of importance or insignificance. This is why the narrator said: **"Just as he taught us the chapters of the Qur'aan."** This highlights the widespread practice of performing *al-Istikhaarah* among them.

8. This *Ḥadeeth* emphasizes the importance of spreading knowledge, teaching people the *Qur'aan*, the *Adhkaar*, and the supplications, and having them repeat these until they are memorized. It is the duty of teachers and parents to do this, following the example set by the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet's teaching of this supplication to his Companions clearly shows the significance of this responsibility.

9. It is clear that one does not perform *al-Istikhaarah* for things that are *Ḥaraam* (forbidden) or *Makrooh* (disliked); and what good can a person expect from doing something that is prohibited in the *Sharee`ah*?!

10. The *Ḥadeeth* explicitly states that *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* consists of two Rak`aat, as the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Let him pray two *Rak`aat*."**

11. The *Ḥadeeth* teaches that *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* is to be performed separately from the obligatory prayers, as indicated by the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: **"other than the obligatory prayers."** The matter has already been explained in detail in the book.

12. The *Ḥadeeth* teaches that the intention for the obligatory prayer should not be combined with the non-obligatory prayer, as these are two different acts of worship. Moreover, the intention for the obligatory prayer is a condition for the prayer's validity. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said in the *Ḥadeeth*: **"other than the obligatory prayer."**

13. The two *Rak`aat* of *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* are to be performed like any other prayer. One must fulfill the *Shuroot* (Conditions), *Arkaan* (Pillars), *Waajibaat* (Obligations), and *Sunnan* of prayers. It begins with Takbeer and ends with Tasleem. This is indicated in the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: **"Let him pray two Rak`aat other than the obligatory prayer."**

14. The Prophet's ﷺ statement: **"If one of you intends to do something, let him pray two Rak`aat,"** teaches that *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* has a specific intention; this intention must be present from the beginning of the prayer until its completion.

Therefore, if someone begins praying two *Rak`aat* of the regular *Sunnah* prayer, or any other *Sunnah* prayer, and then the intention to perform *al-Istikhaarah* arises, the *Ḥadeeth* implies that this intention is invalid. A specific intention for *al-Istikhaarah* must be made before beginning the two *Rak`aat*, as previously explained.

15. This *Ḥadeeth* (of Jaabir رضي الله عنه) and others do not mention which Surahs are recommended to be recited in the two *Rak`aat* of *al-Istikhaarah* prayer. Therefore, the recitation in them remains unrestricted, without being limited to a specific Surah or specific Aayaat.

16. The Prophet's ﷺ statement in the *Ḥadeeth*: **"Then let him say,"** apparently indicates that this supplication is to be said after concluding the two *Rak`aat* with *Tasleem*.

17. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* highlights the servant's weakness and limited knowledge, as he relies on his Lord's guidance in his affairs. This shows that the person has neither the power to harm nor benefit himself. Reflecting on the words of the supplication clearly shows this, as the phrases, **"For You are able and I am not, and You know, and I do not know,"** and so on, demonstrate the utmost humility and weakness.

18. Similarly, *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* shows that a person may take an action that ultimately harms him, even though he hoped it would be beneficial. What seems good to a person isn't necessarily good for his Faith and livelihood. As the saying goes: "Beware of what you feel safe in." Therefore, one should not rely solely on outer appearances, as they can be misleading, but instead, should seek Allaah's guidance and support in all his affairs.

19. This supplication cultivates reliance on Allaah in the hearts of the Believers, because seeking guidance through supplication involves trusting the matter to Allaah while also taking the necessary steps. This is the true meaning of reliance, as in the statement: "O Allaah! If You know that this matter..." With this, the servant entrusts his affairs to his Lord.

Some groups have gone astray regarding reliance on Allaah. Among them are:

a. Those who neglect the means and only rely on entrusting the matter to Allaah are disobeying Allaah's Sharee`ah.

b. Those who neglect entrusting the matter to Allaah and rely solely on the means, thereby falling into Shirk and Kufr.

This supplication serves as a clear example of proper reliance on Allaah, combining trust in Him with taking the means He تعالى has instructed.

20. This supplication also cultivates in the Believer's heart deep reverence for Allaah تبارك وتعالى, who is deserving of all reverence. The servant's statement: **"I appeal to You to support me with Your Power, and I ask You for Your great blessings. For You are capable, and I am not; and You know, and I do not."** expresses a profound sense of reverence for Allaah تعالى that benefits the Believer's heart. He attributes all power to Allaah and combined it with knowledge. Power and Knowledge are the two pillars of reverence.

Therefore, if the servant is mindful of this during his supplication, he will realize that Allaah will grant his request, by His permission.

21. This supplication also helps cultivate in the Believer's heart an awareness of the greatness of Allaah's all-encompassing Knowledge. When the servant says: **"And You are the Knower of the unseen,"** it instills in the Believer a sense that Allaah – through His Knowledge – is with him, and His Knowledge encompasses all things. The person is seeking guidance from an All-Knowing Lord from whom nothing is hidden. This feeling also has a clear impact on the Believer's belief during supplication.

The station of *Iḥsaan* (excellence in worship), the highest level of Faith, is rooted in worshiping Allaah through His beautiful Names, like *al-`Aleem* (the All-Knowing), *al-Ḥakeem* (the All-Wise), *al-Qadeer* (the All-Powerful), and others. The emphatic form in the phrase: **"Knower of the unseen"** highlights the Believer's conviction that his Lord's Knowledge is perfect, such that nothing is hidden from Him. Anyone who holds this belief in his heart during supplication will nearly always receive a response.

22. This *Ḥadeeth* affirms the Noble Attributes of Allaah تبارك وتعالى in a manner befitting His Majesty, including the Attributes of Knowledge and Power. This serves as evidence for Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah (أهل السنة والجماعة) in affirming these Attributes of Allaah. They are pleased to

have such evidence and are the foremost in Glorifying Allaah with such Noble Attributes. Glorifying Allaah and Praising Him by affirming these Noble Attributes is the highest form of worship, and those who deny or misinterpret such Attributes of their Lord are upon a misguided path.

23. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* shows that the Believer worships Allaah and asks for His help through His Most Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes. Among Allaah's Attributes are Knowledge and Power, and some of the effects of these Attributes related to *al-Istikhaarah* are:

a. That the servant asks his Lord, by virtue of His Knowledge and Power, to decree what is best for him. The servant places his trust in the All-Knowing, All-Powerful Lord. Therefore, the servant is content and holds good expectations of his Lord. Similarly, worshiping Allaah through His other Most Beautiful Names is also a form of devotion.

b. Worshiping Allaah by His Name al-Razzaaq (The Provider) means that the servant should ask none but his Lord for his sustenance and rely on none but Him. He should trust that whatever sustenance has been decreed for him will be granted, which will bring him contentment with Allaah's decree.

24. The *Ḥadeeth* teaches that the servant can never be independent of Allaah, not even for even a blink of an eye. The servant seeks Allaah's guidance in his most private matters and needs because he does not know what is best for himself. Allaah is completely Self-Sufficient, while the servant is entirely needy. The *Ḥadeeth* cultivates in the Believer a connection with his Lord even in his most private affairs and his worldly and religious needs.

25. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* has a clear effect on the heart of the Believer because it brings him inner peace. When a servant seeks guidance from Allaah and recites this supplication, it brings him tranquility within his heart, eliminating all disturbances and illusions. This is supported by the words of the supplication, when the supplicant says:

"If You know that this matter is good for me…" and when he says: "**Turn it away from me and turn me away from it, and decree for me what is good wherever it may be, then make me content with it."** The essence of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, specifically, and every other supplication in general, is to worship Allaah, rely on Him, and trust His judgment. This reliance helps eliminate hesitation, disturbance, and anxiety from the heart.

This is one of the outcomes of obedience. Allaah تعالى has linked goodness and success to acts of obedience, and He, in His infinite Wisdom, has ordained their effects in this world and the Hereafter. If a person reflects on these effects, he would never prioritize anything above acts of obedience. How much more so if he were to understand the harmful effects of sins; this would only increase his aversion to them and his desire to avoid them.

26. One of the effects of seeking Allaah's guidance on the heart is that it increases one's love for Allaah. This is why a servant seeks guidance from his Lord, because of the love he has for Him, and he is content with what He تعالى decrees for him. Beyond contentment comes a degree of tranquility, and love is among the noblest acts of the heart. Therefore, when seeking guidance, the servant prays with a heart full of love for Allaah, and something arises within him that makes him content only with what his Lord has chosen for him, knowing and being certain that He تعالى will only choose what is best for him.

To clarify the matter, a person seeks advice from those closest and dearest to him, trusting they will only guide him towards what benefits him and is in his best interest, and will not intentionally cause him harm. Turning to Allaah for guidance is more noble and elevated than seeking advice from others because it enhances the person's confidence, knowing that nothing is concealed from the One he calls upon, the One who knows the true nature of all things.

27. This *Ḥadeeth* highlights the importance of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* in a Muslim's life. Because of this, the Prophet ﷺ was keen to explain and teach it to his Companions, much like he did with the Surahs of the Qur'aan. Its importance underscores that Muslims should not ignore, neglect, or delay practicing it, nor should they substitute it with something else.

28. *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* highlights the significance of *Ṣalaah* in the life of a Muslim. The person seeking guidance does not limit himself to just supplication, but adds two *Rak`aat* (units of prayer) before making his supplication. From this, we understand the reason why the Prophet ﷺ would turn to *Ṣalaah* whenever faced with difficult matters. This is because *Ṣalaah* serves as a connection between the servant and his Lord. The times when *Ṣalaah* is prescribed are more numerous than the times when it is prohibited. *Ṣalaah* includes many forms of worship, such as supplication, recitation of the Qur'aan, bowing, prostration, and various forms of remembrance such as saying *Sub-ḥaan Allaah*, *al-Ḥamdulillaah*, *Allaahu Akbar*. It also includes humility, reverence, sincerity, and other acts of the heart.

29. *Al-Istikhaarah* combines *al-Ṣalaah* followed by supplication. The prayer before the supplication is like offering a greeting to kings before making a request. Allaah تبارك وتعالى is the King of Kings, and *al-Ṣalaah* is a connection between the servant and his Lord; it is a private conversation. As discussed earlier in the book, *al-Ṣalaah* signifies obedience and serves as *Waseelah*, *Ṣadaqah*, and a source of help that elevates the supplication. Therefore, the supplication for guidance is recited after the *Ṣalaah*, not before, as this is a fitting position.

30. When the person supplicates, saying: **"O Allaah! I seek Your guidance through Your Knowledge and Your power,"** the supplication combines the Attributes of Knowledge and Power.

The connection between Knowledge and Power, along with the act of seeking guidance, is evident. The person seeking guidance does not

know where goodness resides, nor can he attain it by himself, even if he knew. Hence, he calls upon Allaah using His two Noble Attributes relevant to his supplication: Knowledge and Power.

Part of the wisdom in proper supplication is using the most Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes of Allaah that best fit one's needs. Another benefit is that by choosing a specific Name and Attribute over others, a person becomes more aware of his current state. This awareness leads to humility, submission, and a sense of dependence on Allaah. For instance, if someone asks Allaah for sustenance and chooses the Name: الغني "The Rich," as *Waseelah*, while recognizing his own poverty and lack of means, this is more beneficial to his heart and more likely to be answered.

31. In this supplication, the Attribute of Knowledge precedes the Attribute of Power, as expressed in: **"O Allaah, I seek Your guidance through Your Knowledge, and I seek Your Power through Your Might."** Among the secrets of this order is:

That the one seeking guidance first asks his Lord through His knowledge of what is good, for only Allaah تعالى knows what is good in detail.

Then comes Allaah's Power to help the individual with what is best for him. Therefore, they are arranged in the supplication according to their order for the desired outcome.

Part of the wisdom in every supplication is that one should carefully organize the words of his supplication, taking into account his need and intention. This can only be achieved through a deep understanding of the meanings behind the Most Beautiful Names of Allaah.

32. Ignorance causes a person to miss out on many good things, which is why he asks his Lord for guidance, saying: **"O Allaah, I seek Your guidance through Your Knowledge."**

33. In the supplication, when the person says: **"And I appeal to You to support me with Your Power,"** he is asking his Lord to grant him the ability to do good. Many good things slip away from a person, not because of ignorance, but because he is unable to attain them, whether due to lack of patience and endurance or lack of resources to achieve them, and so on!

34. The person's statement in his supplication: **"And I ask You of Your immense bounty,"** affirms that bounty is in Allaah's Hands; He تعالى grants it to whomever He wills, and Allaah is the Owner of immense bounty. Therefore, the one seeking guidance asks his Lord to bestow from this vast bounty and to make him among those who perceive and value His favors.

35. The statement of the supplicant: **"And I ask You of Your immense Bounty,"** is an affirmation that Allaah's bounty is limitless. Allaah is Great, and His bounty is vast. This encourages the Believer to trust in what Allaah possesses, and to recognize that Allaah owns the treasures of the heavens and the earth, as He تعالى said:

﴿هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنفِقُوا عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِندَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ يَنفَضُّوا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ﴾

{They (the hypocrites) are the ones who say: "Do not spend anything on those who side with Allaah's Messenger, until they desert him." And to Allaah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not understand.} [351]

[351] Surah al-Munaafiqoon (63): 7

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ يَمِينَ اللهِ مَلْأَى لَا يَغِيضُهَا نَفَقَةٌ، سَحَّاءُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ، أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْفَقَ مُنْذُ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَنْقُصْ مَا فِي يَمِينِهِ، وَعَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ، وَبِيَدِهِ الْأُخْرَى الْفَيْضُ، أَوِ الْقَبْضُ، يَرْفَعُ وَيَخْفِضُ

"The Right (Hand) of Allaah is full, and (its fullness) is not affected by the continuous spending night and day. Do you see what He has spent since He created the Heavens and the Earth? Yet all that has not decreased what is in His Right Hand. His Throne is over the water, and in His other Hand is the Bounty or the Power to bring about death, [in another narration, it is: **"and in His other Hand is the balance (of Justice)"**], **and He elevates and degrades (whom He likes)."** [352]

36. The supplicant's statement: **"And I ask You of Your immense Bounty,"** also shows that any good that Allaah تعالى gives to His servant is purely a favor from Him, not something the servant has a right to. Instead, it is due to the perfection of Allaah's grace. Allaah has no obligations except those that He has obligated upon Himself. Allaah decides matters with His Wisdom.

This results in the Believer's behavior being driven by complete reliance on Allaah, like someone who asks for something knowing he has no right to it, but instead the entire matter depends on the generosity and grace of the One being asked.

37. In the statement of the supplicant: **"For You are able, and I am not,"** in other words, the servant is saying: "I have no power or strength except through Allaah, and I disavow my own ability and strength."

[352] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (7411, 7419) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (37-993)

He thus confines all power and ability to his Lord and disavows his own power and strength except in what his Lord enables him to do. This reflects the practical meaning of our saying: لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله "There is no power or strength except through Allaah."

When the servant keeps this meaning in mind during his prayer, he can feel its impact. He supplicates to his Lord with the supplication of one who recognizes he has no power, ability, or capacity for anything, and he attributes all of that to his Lord. In this way, he understands the true meaning of Tawḥeed, the Greatness of Allaah, and reliance on Him.

38. At the start of the supplication, knowledge is mentioned before power, saying: **"I ask for guidance by the virtue of Your knowledge, and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power."** Yet, midway, the order is reversed, mentioning power before knowledge, stating, **"You are able, and I am not; You know, and I do not."** This change occurs because:

a. At the start of the supplication, the supplicant seeks guidance from his Lord. He asks Allaah to guide him to what will benefit him and to give him the ability to do what he is seeking guidance about.

b. In the middle of the *Du`aa*, the supplicant says: **"I ask You from Your immense bounty,"** and only Allaah is capable of bestowing His bounty. Therefore, the person says: **"You are able, and I am not,"** mentioning power first because it is connected to attaining Allaah's bounty.

39. In the *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, we learn the importance of beginning the supplication with respect. The supplicant, before making any request, should begin by praising Allaah, glorifying Him, affirming His greatness, recognizing one's own weaknesses, flaws, shortcomings, and ignorance, and trusting the matter to Allaah. That's why, in *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, the person says: **"O Allaah! I seek Your guidance**

through Your Knowledge and Your Power," followed by a request: **"O Allaah! If You know that this matter is good for me…"**

As discussed in the book, before starting any supplication, the Sunnah is to:

a. Praise Allaah,
b. Send peace and blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ,
c. Acknowledge one's shortcomings.

40. The supplicant's statement: **"If you know,"** is not expressed in doubt, because doubting Allaah's Knowledge and Wisdom is Kufr (disbelief). Rather, the doubt here relates to a person's knowledge about the matter, whether it is good or bad. As the *Du`aa* further clarifies: **"O Allaah! If it is good, then ordain it for me. And if it is evil, then distance it away from me."**

41. As explained in the book, [353] *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is to be made for one matter at a time. One should not combine two different matters.

42. In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, religion is prioritized over worldly matters, as in the phrase, **"in my religion and my livelihood,"** and in another narration, **"my religion and my worldly life."** This emphasizes the importance of focusing on what matters most.

This teaches the Believer that matters of religion are more important than worldly matters. Indeed, this is true, because when someone's religion is sound, his worldly life will also be sound. Conversely, if someone's religion is corrupt, his worldly life will be corrupt too, even if it is adorned with its finery and embellishments. What good is there in such a life without the sweetness of Faith, which brings happiness to the heart, peace to the soul, and the very essence of life? Those with understanding will recognize this.

[353] See Chapter (15)

43. The supplicant's statement, **"and my livelihood,"** pertains to worldly life. Consequently, the person seeking guidance prays to his Lord to select what is best for him in both his religious and worldly affairs.

44. Combining the phrases **"my religion"** and **"my livelihood"** in terms of good and evil indicates that what benefits a person's religion also benefits his livelihood, and what harms his religion also harms his livelihood.

This fundamental principle has faced challenges recently, with worldly concerns and worries now taking precedence in people's lives. Many judge success primarily by worldly achievements, often at the cost of their faith.

﴿بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا * وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ﴾

{But you prefer the worldly life, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting} [354]

45. The supplicant's statement: **"and the outcome of my affair,"** pertains to the Hereafter. With this, the one seeking guidance has requested his Lord for goodness in three aspects:

a. In his religion, as indicated by his statement: **"in my religion."**

b. In his livelihood, which refers to his worldly life, as indicated by his statement: **"and my livelihood."**

c. And in the outcome of his affair, which is his Hereafter, as indicated by his statement: **"and the outcome of my affair."**

Whoever is given good in these three areas has achieved full happiness and a joyful life.

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[354] Surah al-A`laa (87): 16-17

46. In the *Ḥadeeth* of Jaabir رضي الله عنه, one of the narrators - who was uncertain - said: أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ (or the Prophet ﷺ said: **"My immediate and future affairs"**) – scholars have disagreed on its placement, offering several opinions: [355]

d. It is said to serve as a substitute for all three phrases in the narration – **"my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs"** – and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **"If You know that this matter is good for me in my immediate and future affairs."**

e. It is said that this serves as a substitute for the last two phrases in the narration, and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **"If You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my immediate and future affairs."**

f. It is also said that this serves as a substitute for the last phrase in the narration, and according to this, the wording of the *Ḥadeeth* would be: **"If You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, my immediate and future affairs."**

But the phrases: **"my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs"** have been confirmed from the Aḥaadeeth of Jaabir, Abu Sa`eed, Ibn Mas`ood, and Abu Ayyoob al-Anṣaaree رضي الله عنهم أجمعين. So, these phrases take precedence over the doubtful ones.

47. The supplicant's statement: **"and my livelihood,"** and in another narration, **"and my worldly life,"** shows that Islaam cares about people's well-being and their livelihood. It also instructs them to ask Allaah for these matters. This does not oppose the command to be

[355] See Fatḥ al-Baaree (18/171)

free from worldly desires. Instead, it teaches them to depend on Allaah rather than on themselves.

48. The *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* illustrates the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah concerning Predestination and Divine Decree, namely, that Allaah has decreed and ordained everything.

The supplicant's statement: **"and I appeal to You to support me with Your Power,"** reflects Allaah's sovereignty over all things, and this understanding is valid only with complete Faith that everything is by Divine Decree.

﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾

{Verily, We have created all things with Qadar (Divine Preordainments)} [356]

49. The *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* also teaches that nothing occurs except by the Decree of Allaah, and this is part of the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah.

This leads the Believer to tranquility, steadfastness, and contentment with what Allaah Decrees. Everything that occurs is by Allaah's Decree and Predestination, and nothing happens unless He تعالى has decreed it to happen.

50. As mentioned earlier in the book, *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* also teaches that Allaah erases what He تعالى Wills and approves what He Wills, as evidenced by the statement: **"Turn it away from me and turn me away from it."** Turning away only occurs after it has been written and decreed for the person.

[356] Surah al-A`laa (87): 16-17

51. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* also clarifies that Allaah links causes with their effects, as supplicating to Allaah تبارك وتعالى is regarded as one of the causes.

This is part of the moderate approach of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah regarding reliance on Allaah. Because this is a point where people are divided into three groups:

a. One extreme group ignores the means while claiming to rely on Allaah.

b. The other extreme group ignores reliance on Allaah and instead focuses solely on the means.

c. Regarding Ahl al-Sunnah, they understand that true reliance on Allaah is only achieved by taking necessary actions, so they rely on Allaah through those very means.

Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated that a man said: "O Messenger of Allaah! Shall I tie it (the camel) and rely (upon Allaah), or leave it loose and rely (upon Allaah)?" He ﷺ said:

اعْقِلْهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ

"Tie it and rely (upon Allaah)." [357]

Those who neglect practical efforts yet claim to rely on Allaah are deluded; this is wishful thinking, similar to avoiding marriage while expecting Allaah to grant them offspring, or ignoring farming while trusting Allaah for a good harvest. True reliance on Allaah involves effort, whereas helplessness is just wishful thinking.

[357] Sunan al-Tirmidhee (2517) and graded as "Ḥasan" by Shaikh al-Albaanee

52. The superlative expression in the *Ḥadeeth*: علّام الغيوب **"All-Knowing of the unseen,"** indicates that the servant attributes all knowledge to Allaah تعالى, and that the servant knows nothing of the unseen. Whoever claims otherwise has lied and disbelieved.

Thus, the falsehood of charlatans, sorcerers, and magicians is revealed. Their influence has grown recently due to a lack of understanding of Tawḥeed among some.

These individuals can be identified by their claims to have knowledge of the unseen. Anyone who claims to know the unseen is a liar and a disbeliever, even if he practices Qur'aanic healing (Ruqya), recites some legitimate incantations, or appears pious and righteous. None of this will benefit him before Allaah.

53. The *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* also teaches that every person who seeks good is in need of three things:

a. First, that Allaah decrees good for him or grants him the ability to achieve it, meaning He تعالى provides him with the capability. This is why he says in his supplication: **"So decree it for me."**

b. Second, that Allaah makes it easier for him, because when good things are hard to achieve and require significant time and effort, a person might find it too challenging and give up. This is why he says in his supplication: **"And make it easy for me."**

c. Third, that Allaah blesses it for him. Without divine blessing, a person cannot truly benefit from good. This is why he requests in his supplication: **"And bless me in it."**

With these three things, everything good is perfected for a person. We ask Allaah, al-Kareem (the Generous), for His bounty. From this, one learns that *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* involves seeking good in its entirety.

54. The *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* teaches that a servant should seek three things when confronting the evil that Allaah has decreed for him:

a. First, that Allaah ward off evil from him. This is why the servant says in his supplication: **"Avert it from me."**

b. Second, that Allaah safeguards the servant from evil and harm because people are often unaware and prone to wrongdoing. This is why it is fitting for him to say in his supplication: **"Avert me from it,"** because a person might bring harm upon himself due to his ignorance.

c. Third, that Allaah decrees for him something better than what He تعالى has kept away from him of harm. This is why he says: **"And decree for me what is good."**

d. Fourth, that Allaah makes His servant content with the good He تعالى has written for him. Sometimes, a servant's ignorance causes his soul to cling to its original desires, which Allaah تعالى has diverted from him. The servant realizes that if he is not content with what Allaah has decreed, his soul remains attached to these desires, and as a result, his life is ruined because he lacks contentment and cannot accept the new good that has been written for him. This is why the servant prays: **"Then make me content with it."**

Anyone who accepts and finds contentment in what Allaah تعالى has decreed will experience peace of mind, tranquility of heart, with worries no longer scattered. Allaah تعالى guides his thoughts and makes his life pleasant. He finds happiness twice: when Allaah averts evil and when Allaah decrees good in its place.

To truly understand the importance of this phrase in the *Ḥadeeth*: **"Then make me content with it,"** consider the individual whom Allaah

has blessed with good things, yet he is not satisfied. His soul remains attached to what he missed more than to the blessings that Allaah has given him. He suffers twice – first, because his current life isn't peaceful, and second, he cannot retrieve what he lost.

55. In this *Ḥadeeth*, we learn that Allaah grants success to His Believing servant in three ways:

a. First, He تعالى decrees good for him, helps him, makes it easy for him, and blesses it for him.

b. Second, He تعالى protects him from evil and keeps it away from him.

c. Third, He تعالى replaces evil with good for him and then makes him content with it.

So praise be to Allaah for His vast Mercy and immense Favors, and we ask Him not to deprive us of them because of our sins.

56. As explained in detail in the book, [358] in this *Du`aa*, the supplicant is asking Allaah تعالى for two types of help:

a. *Isti`aanah* (إستعانة): In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person seeks Allaah's help, saying: **"So decree it for me, and make it easy for me, and bless me in it"**, this is *Isti`aanah*, i.e., seeking help for something good.

b. *Istighaathah* (إستغاثة): he also seeks Allaah's help, saying: **"then keep it away from me and keep me away from it"**, this is *Istighaathah*, i.e., seeking help or protection from something harmful.

[358] See Chapter (18)

During *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, the person asks Allaah for guidance and help, hoping that He تعالى grants what is beneficial for him, while also asking Allaah's aid to keep away anything that might be harmful.

57. It was already explained with examples in the book that the phrase: **"Turn it away from me, and turn me away from it,"** means that the servant is requesting his Lord for complete protection from evil. This only occurs when Allaah تعالى repels evil from the servant and then turns the servant away from evil, ensuring both are kept separate. This way, complete separation from evil is achieved.

58. The phrase in the *Du`aa*: **"And turn me away from it,"** refers to human ignorance. Allaah تعالى may protect a servant from harm, but the servant, due to his lack of knowledge about the outcome, clings to what is harmful, pursues it persistently, and mourns its loss. He might even ask his Lord for it and persist in his supplications!

Therefore, the servant needs to include both in his supplication: **"Turn it away from me"** and **"Turn me away from it."**

59. The phrase in the *Du`aa*: **"Then make me content with it,"** is a request to Allaah to grant him satisfaction with whatever He تعالى chooses for him, and bestows upon him of His Favors and Blessings.

This motivates the Believer to behave righteously. Whoever is satisfied with what Allaah has given him will remove envy and greed from his heart toward what others have, leading to a joyful life and inner peace.

But whoever is unhappy with the blessings Allaah has given and does not show gratitude will be consumed by regret. His mind will be focused on what others have, leading to a troubled and constrained life. We seek refuge in Allaah from such negligence.

60. The *Ḥadeeth* of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* teaches that if someone prays to Allaah for guidance on a matter and it is not decreed for him, he should let go of attachment to that thing. This approach makes life more peaceful and calms the heart. It offers a practical solution for modern challenges, where people mourn lost opportunities they thought were good, but which Allaah did not decree for them, for a Wisdom known only to Him.

61. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* embodies complete submission and humility before Allaah. Anyone reflecting on its words will see them as the highest expression of humility before Allaah. Because it attributes all knowledge and power to Allaah, while denying knowledge and power to oneself. Humility before Allaah is one of the essentials of worship.

62. Among the benefits of *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is that it brings tranquility and reduces anxiety many feel when deciding whether to take a certain action or not. This hesitation and worry often disrupts a person's peace of mind, so *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* helps eliminate these concerns, providing tranquility to the Believing servant.

63. Being guided towards seeking guidance is in itself a great Favor of Allaah. As Allaah تعالى said:

﴿يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا﴾

{He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has (undoubtedly) been given much good.} [359]

Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah is a pathway to earning good deeds because it includes *Ṣalaah* (prayer) and *Du`aa* (supplication). Worshiping Allaah is a reward in itself. So, even if the person seeking guidance received nothing more than the reward for his prayer and supplication, it would be sufficient. So how much more when a person receives Allaah's blessings in succession?

[359] Surah al-Baqarah (2): 269

64. Seeking guidance from Allaah shows that a Believer trusts no one more than his Lord, تبارك وتعالى. As a result, he sets aside his own reasoning and observations and turns to his Lord in his prayer and supplication. This attitude arises from trusting Allaah, thinking positively about Him, and acknowledging one's own faults and shortcomings.

65. Whoever performs *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* and then acts accordingly should not regret, even if the outcome doesn't match his desires. For instance, a person might pray *Ṣalaah al-Istikhaarah* regarding marriage, and then end up getting divorced. The true Believer is content with what Allaah has decreed for him, even if it differs from his personal wishes and preferences.

And with this, what I intended has come to an end. I ask Allaah تبارك وتعالى to bestow me with beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, open my heart to receive His blessings, make my deeds pleasing to Him, accept them from me, and put them on the scale of good deeds for both my parents. And I pray He does not deprive me of the reward for all my actions.

Appendix 1

Consulting People

A. Consulting People:

Whoever seeks the counsel of the Creator will not regret it and whoever seeks the advice of the Believers will feel confident about his decisions, for Allaah has said in the Qur'aan:

﴿وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ﴾

{…and consult them in the matter. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allaah, certainly, Allaah loves those who put their trust (in Him)} [360]

Allaah تعالى also says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾

{And those who respond to their Lord (i.e., by becoming Believers and worshiping Him), and perform *al-Ṣalaah*, and who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation} [361]

`Abdullaah Ibn al-Zubair رضي الله عنه consulted the people and performed *al-Istikhaarah* three times before demolishing the *Ka`bah* and rebuilding it after it got damaged in the conflict.[362]

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[360] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 159
[361] Surah al-Shooraa (42): 38
[362] Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (402-1333), The Book of Ḥajj, Chapter: Demolition the Ka`bah and rebuilding it.

ß. What Should Be Done First, *al-Istikhaarah* or al-Istishaarah?

There are three opinions about this:

a. One performs *al-Istikhaarah* first, because this is what we have been commanded.

b. One should seek good advice from others first, so that he doesn't chase people's opinions after seeking guidance from his Lord.

c. The matter is broad.

All of these are opinions based on preference; they are interpretations without conclusive evidence, and therefore the more likely view is that the matter is broad.

To those who say: "One should not consult anyone after seeking guidance from their Lord", it can be said in response: "Likewise, one should not consult anyone before Allaah." And Allaah knows best.

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"The scholars have differed on whether consultation should be sought first or *al-Istikhaarah* should be done first? The correct approach is to proceed with *al-Istikhaarah* first, according to the saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكْعَتَيْنِ

"If any of you intends to do something, he should offer a two-*Rak`aat* prayer"

One should begin with *al-Istikhaarah*, and if, after repeating it three times, the matter remains unclear, you should seek advice from

others. Whatever guidance you receive is what Allaah تعالى has chosen for you, and you should act on it. [363]

And we said: "One should do *al-Istikhaarah* three times." This is because it was the habit of the Prophet ﷺ to repeat a *Du`aa* three times when he made it. *Al-Istikhaarah* is a *Du`aa*, and it may happen that the matter is not clear to the person at first. It may become clear during the first time (for some), or the second, or the third. If it is still unclear, then he should seek advice from others." [364]

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله said:

"This is the *Du`aa* of *al-Istikhaarah*. One should recite it while performing *al-Istikhaarah*. Then, he should seek advice from those whose opinions are respected (i.e., knowledgeable and experienced individuals from whom he expects goodness and who genuinely wish to help him) in matters related to marriage, travel, partnerships, or any other concerns that affect him. This is the position regarding *al-Istikhaarah*, which is a Sunnah. Along with this, it is Sunnah for one to seek counsel from those they consider capable of providing guidance, after performing *al-Istikhaarah*. If he feels inclined toward one of the two options, he should choose that one. If he remains uncertain, he should repeat *al-Istikhaarah* a second or third time, continuing until he feels at peace with one of the choices."

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[363] Some scholars are of the opinion that *al-Istikhaarah* should be performed only once. Shaikh Ibn Baaz's رحمه الله position was that one should perform *al-Istikhaarah* and then seek advice, and to repeat it if the matter remains unclear. As for the narration of Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said to repeat performing al-Istikhaarah seven times is extremely weak and cannot be used as proof. Al-Ḥaafidh Ibn Ḥajr said in al-Fatḥ (11/187): "If the narration were authentic, this would have been the most popular opinion, however, its chain of transmission is extremely weak."

[364] Sharḥ Riyaaḍh al-Ṣaaliḥeen (4/162) of Shaikh al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله

Shaikh Ibn Baaz رحمه الله also said:

"(If the matter is not clear) one should repeat *al-Istikhaarah*, he repeats it, and consults people with experience, people (who care and) love (him), and people (known for their) goodness. He should consult them after performing *al-Istikhaarah*, and whenever his heart is open to something, he should do it, after *al-Istikhaarah* and after the consultation." [365]

Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen رحمه الله said:

"The Prophet ﷺ, who was the best person in his thoughts and most correct of them, would also seek the advice of his companions in some matters that proved difficult. Likewise, the Caliphs (*Khulafaa'*) after him would consult upright and sensible individuals. Both conditions are essential when seeking counsel.

You should seek advice from someone knowledgeable, experienced, critical, patient, and upright in his Faith. Because someone who is not upright in his religion, regardless of intelligence and experience, cannot be trusted; consulting him offers no benefit. Such individuals do not qualify as advisors because their lack of righteousness risks betrayal. We ask Allaah to protect us from these, as he might lead you toward harm, unbeneficial matters, or cause evil and destruction in ways only Allaah knows.

Suppose he is someone disobedient, immoral, and evil; consulting him is not allowed, as it could lead to your downfall (and ruin you).

Similarly, if someone is upright in his religion, intelligent, and trustworthy, but indifferent and inexperienced, or hasty and lacking wisdom, then avoid seeking advice from him. Such a person might approach matters superficially, ignoring essential background details. If he is also hasty, his impatience could misguide you toward unhelpful

[365] From Shaikh Ibn Baa'z official website. Fatwa No. 13019

conclusions. Therefore, one should always seek someone who possesses insight, reason, and righteousness in his Faith. And success is from Allaah alone." [366]

[366] Sharḥ al-Riyaaḍh al-Ṣaaliḥeen (4/159-160) of Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen

Appendix 2

Additional Guidelines

Some additional guidelines regarding *al-Istikhaarah*:

a. A two *Rak`aat* (unit) non-obligatory prayer should be performed separately for *al-Istikhaarah*. *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* can also be performed with the *Sunnah al-Raatibah* (the 12 units of Sunnah prayers performed throughout the day, two before *Fajr*, two plus two before *Ẓhuhr*, and two after it, two after *Maghrib*, and two after *`Ishaa*). It cannot be performed with the obligatory prayer.

b. The prohibited times for prayers should be avoided. The two *Rak`aat* should not be performed during the times when it is forbidden to pray (i.e., after *Fajr* until the sun rises, at noon when the sun is directly overhead, or after *`Asr* until the sun sets).

c. One should focus and perform *al-Ṣalaah* with tranquility.

d. The *Du`aa'* of *al-Istikhaarah* is to be made after making the *Tasleem* (salutation).

e. One should begin the *Du`aa* by praising Allaah and asking Allaah's Peace and Blessings for the Prophet ﷺ.

f. One can/should raise their hands while doing *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*.

g. Many people mistakenly believe that after praying *al-Istikhaarah*, they must see a dream or receive a clear sign. But the Prophet ﷺ did not mention this in this *Ḥadeeth*. Seeing a good dream isn't directly related to *al-Istikhaarah*. A person may have a dream, or he might not. The *Ḥadeeth* about having good dreams is general and isn't explicitly

linked to *al-Istikhaarah*. Therefore, after supplicating, a person takes steps toward the decision. If Allaah facilitates it, it is a sign that it is good. If obstacles arise or it becomes difficult, it's a sign that it may not be what is best.

h. Anyone who performs *al-Istikhaarah* and acts according to his best judgment should not regret his choice, even if it differs from his personal wishes. For example, suppose a person seeks *al-Istikhaarah* regarding marriage. In case a divorce occurs between them later, then the true Believer is satisfied with whatever Allaah has chosen for him, even if it does not suit his desires and wishes.

Appendix 3

Permissible Types Of Tawassul

A. Definition Of Tawassul:

It means drawing close to what is sought after and attaining it with desire and aspiration. Allaah تعالى says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

{O you who have believed, fear Allaah and seek the means of nearness to Him and strive in His cause that you may succeed} [367]

B. Types Of Tawassul:

There are two types of *Tawassul*:

a. Permissible *Tawassul*

b. Prohibited *Tawassul*

And each of these types of *Tawassul* is further divided into three categories.

a. Three Types Of Permissible *Tawassul*

i. *Tawassul* Through Allaah's Most Beautiful Names And Noble Attributes

Tawassul (seeking a means of nearness) to Allaah تبارك وتعالى by the means of invoking Him through His Most Beautiful Names and Noble Attributes is one of the permissible types of *Tawassul*.

[367] Surah al-Maaidah (5):35

Examples from the Qur'aan:
Allaah تعالى says:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا﴾

{And to Allaah belong the most Beautiful Names, so invoke Him by them} [368]

It means: "To Allaah belong the most Beautiful Names that indicate His Perfect Attributes; so, supplicate to Him by these great Names and do not associate partners with Him in your supplication."

Allaah تعالى also says:

﴿قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ﴾

{Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Call upon Allaah or call upon the Most Merciful (Allaah), by whatever name you invoke Him (it is the same), for to Him belong the Best Names.} [369]

Examples from the Sunnah:
Anas Ibn Maalik رضي الله عنه narrated: I was sitting with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ, and a man was standing in prayer, he then bowed, prostrated, recited the Tashah-hud, and supplicated:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ أَنْتَ [وَحْدَكَ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ] الْمَنَّانُ بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ يَا ذَا الْجَلاَلِ وَالإِكْرَامِ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ...

Allaahumma innee as-aluka bi-anna lakal-ḥamd, laa ilaaha illaa ant, [waḥdaka laa shareeka lak], al-mannaan, badee`us-samaawaati wal-arḍh, yaa dhal-jalaali wal-ikraam! Ya hayyu ya qayyoom! Innee as-aluka…

[368] Surah al-A`raaf (7):180
[369] Surah al-Israa (17): 110

(O Allaah, indeed I ask You since all praise is due to You, there is none worthy of worship but You, [and You have no partner or associate] the Bestower, the Originator of the heavens and earth, O Possessor of Majesty and Honor, O Ever-living, O-Eternal, I ask of You…)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

تَدْرُونَ بِمَا دَعَا؟

"Do you know what he has supplicated with?"

They said: "Allaah and His Messenger know best." He ﷺ said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَقَدْ دَعَا اللهَ بِاسْمِهِ الْعَظِيمِ، الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، وَإِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ أَعْطَى

"By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he called upon Allaah by His greatest Name, which, if He is called by it, He responds, and if He is asked by it, He gives." [370]

`Abdullaah Ibn Buraidah al-Aslamee narrated from his father, who said: The Prophet ﷺ heard a man supplicating, and he was saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِأَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللهُ لا إِلهَ إِلاّ أَنْت ، الأَحَدُ الصَّمَدُ الَّذي لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يولَدْ ، وَلَمْ يَكنْ لَهُ كُفُواً أَحَد

"Allaahumma innee as-aluka bi annee ash-hadu annaka ant-Allaahu, laa ilaaha illaa ant, al-aḥad uṣ-Ṣamad, al-ladhee lam yalid wa lam yoolad, wa lam yakun lahoo kufuwan aḥad."

(O Allaah, indeed, I ask you by my testifying that You are Allaah, there is no one worthy of worship except You, the One, as-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need), the one who does not beget, nor was begotten, and there is none who is like Him)

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[370] Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1300) and the wording is his, Sunan Abu Dawood (1495), and Sunan Ibn Maajah (3858), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee. The wording within the brackets is from Sunan Ibn Maajah. See al-Ṣaḥeeḥah (3411)

So, he ﷺ said:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَقَدْ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ بِاسْمِهِ الأَعْظَمِ الَّذِي إِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ أَجَابَ، وَإِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ أَعْطَى

"By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he has asked Allaah by His Greatest Name, the one which if He is called upon by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives." [371]

Examples from *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*:
In *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*, a person seeks the means of drawing closer to Allaah through His Noble Attributes of *`Ilm* (Knowledge) and *Qudrah* (Power). This is because only the One who has complete knowledge of the unseen knows what is best for you, and only the All-Powerful One can make it happen for you if it is good, and prevent it if it is harmful.

ii. *Tawassul* By Means Of A Righteous Deed

Tawassul (seeking a means of nearness) to Allaah تبارك وتعالى by means of a righteous deed performed by the supplicant is another type of permissible *Tawassul*.

Examples from the Qur'aan:
One example of the permissible *Tawassul* is invoking Allaah تبارك وتعالى by means of one's good deeds, such as saying: "O Allaah, I implore You by my belief in You, love for You, veneration of Your Book, and following Your Messenger, to forgive me."

Some of the supplications of the Believers mentioned in the Qur'aan:

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾

[371] Sunan Abu Dawood (985, 1493), Sunan al-Tirmidhee (3475), Sunan al-Nasaa'ee (1301), and Sunan Ibn Maajah (3857) and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ" by Shaikh al-Albaanee.

{"Our Lord! Indeed, we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire."} [372]

And also:

﴿رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ﴾

{"Our Lord, we have believed in what You sent down, and have followed the Messenger, so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth)."} [373]

On the Day of Judgment, Allaah تعالى will praise every Believer who used to supplicate, saying:

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ﴾

{Indeed, there was a party of My slaves who used to say: "Our Lord! We have believed, so forgive us, and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all those who show mercy!"} [374]

Examples from the Sunnah:

Another example is when a supplicant mentions a good deed, which indicates his fear of Allaah, mindfulness of Him, giving preference to earning His pleasure over any other attainment, and his obedience to Him, and implores Him through that deed so that his supplication is more likely to be answered. This is reported in an authentic *Ḥadeeth*, regarding the three men who were trapped in a cave. Then they supplicated to Allaah by virtue of their good deeds, and Allaah subsequently made a way out for them.

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[372] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 16
[373] Surah aal-`Imraan (3): 53
[374] Surah al-Mu'minoon (23): 109

`Abdullaah Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنهما narrated: I heard Allaah's Messenger ﷺ saying: **"Three men from among those (previous nations) who were before you, set out together till they reached a cave at night and entered it. (In another narration: "They were overtaken by rain, and they had to find protection in a mountain cave"). A boulder rolled down the mountain and closed the mouth of the cave. They said (to each other): "Nothing could save you from this rock unless you supplicate to Allaah by virtue of a righteous deed you have done (for Allaah's sake only)." (In another narration: "Look at your good deeds that you did for Allaah's sake and supplicate to Allaah by virtue of that deed so that He might rescue you (from this trouble)."**

So, one of them said: "O Allaah! I had elderly parents, and I used to offer them milk before my family (wife, children, etc.). One day, by chance, I was delayed, and I came late (at night) while they had slept. I milked the sheep for them and took the milk to them, but I found them sleeping. I hated disturbing them, and I disliked providing milk to my family before them. My children were crying out of hunger at my feet, but I waited with the bowl in my hand for them to wake up. I kept on waiting for them to get up till the day dawned. Then they got up and drank the milk. O Allaah! If I did that for Your Sake only, please relieve us from our critical situation caused by this rock." So, the rock shifted a little, but they could not get out."

The Prophet ﷺ added: **"The second man said: "O Allaah! I had a cousin who was the dearest of all people to me, and I wanted to have sexual relations with her, but she refused. Later, she faced a difficult situation during a famine year and came to me. I gave her one hundred twenty Dinars on the condition that she would not resist my desire, and she agreed. When I was about to fulfill my desire, she said: 'It is illegal for you to outrage my chastity except by legitimate marriage.' So, I thought it was a sin to have sexual intercourse with her and left her, though she was the dearest of all the people to me, and I also left the gold I had given her. O Allaah! If I did that for Your**

Sake only, please relieve us from the present calamity." So, the rock shifted a little more, but still, they could not get out of there."

The Prophet ﷺ added: **"Then the third man said: "O Allaah! I employed a few laborers and paid them their wages, except for one man who did not take his wages and left. I invested his wages and acquired a substantial amount of property as a result. He returned (after quite some time) and said to me: 'O Allaah's slave! Pay me my wages.' I said to him: 'All the camels, cows, sheep, and slaves you see are yours.' He said: 'O Allaah's slave! Don't mock me.' I said: 'I am not mocking you.' So, he took all the herds and drove them away, leaving nothing behind. O Allaah! If I did that for Your Sake only, please relieve us from the present suffering." So, that rock shifted completely, and they got out walking."** [375]

Shaikh al-Albaanee رحمه الله said: "It is clear from this *Ḥadeeth* that when a severe calamity befell these three believing men, and they became deeply distressed and despaired of relief - except from Allaah عز وجل - they turned to their Lord, sincerely called upon him, soliciting relief by virtue of their good deeds that they had performed at times of prosperity, hoping that He would relieve them at time of adversity, as mentioned the *Ḥadeeth* in which the Prophet ﷺ said: **"Remember Allaah in times of ease and prosperity, and He will remember you in times of adversity."** [376] Therefore, they plead Allaah by virtue of these good deeds (and were relieved)." [377]

Examples from *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah*:
Performing the two *Rak`aat* optional (*Nafl*) prayer before *Du`aa al-Istikhaarah* is a means of seeking nearness to Allaah through one's good deeds.

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[375] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (2215, 2272, 2333, 3465, 5974) and Ṣaḥeeḥ Muslim (100-2743)
[376] Musnad Aḥmad (2803), Mustadrah al-Ḥaakim (6303, 6304), and graded as "Ṣaḥeeḥ li Ghairihee" by Shaikh al-Albaanee
[377] Al-Tawassul by Shaikh al-Albaanee (1/35)

iii. *Tawassul* By The Virtue Of The Supplication Of A Righteous Person

Tawassul (seeking a means of nearness) to Allaah تعالى by the virtue of the supplication of a living righteous person supplicating for others is one more type of permissible *Tawassul*.

Examples from the Qur'aan:

The permissibility of this type of *Tawassul* is mentioned in the Qur'aan, when the brothers of Yusuf عليه السلام asked their father to supplicate to Allaah for their forgiveness:

﴿قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ﴾

{They said: "O our father! Ask forgiveness (from Allah) for our sins, indeed we have been sinners."} [378]

Examples from the Sunnah:

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated:

أَنَّ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ، كَانَ إِذَا قَحَطُوا اسْتَسْقَى بِالْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكَ بِنَبِيِّنَا ﷺ فَتَسْقِينَا، وَإِنَّا نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكَ بِعَمِّ نَبِيِّنَا فَاسْقِنَا. قَالَ فَيُسْقَوْنَ

"Whenever there was drought, `Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭaab رضي الله عنه used to ask al-`Abbaas Ibn `Abdul Muttalib رضي الله عنه to invoke Allaah for rain. He (`Umar) used to say: "O Allaah! We used to ask our Prophet to invoke You for rain, and You would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke You for rain. O Allaah! Bless us with rain." And so it would rain." [379]

Some people misunderstood this *Ḥadeeth* and inferred from it that `Umar رضي الله عنه sought rain by virtue of the status (and honor) of al-

[378] Surah Yusuf (12): 97

[379] Ṣaḥeeḥ al-Bukhaaree (1010, 3710)

`Abbaas رضي الله عنه, and this is incorrect, because *Tawassul* here was made by virtue of the supplication of Al-`Abbaas and not by virtue of his person.

As for making *Tawassul* by virtue of the dead, the graves of the Prophets and righteous people, or their persons, this is not permissible. Had it been acceptable to make *Tawassul* by virtue of the dead, `Umar رضي الله عنه would have made *Tawassul* by virtue of the Prophet's person and honor at his grave instead of making *Tawassul* by virtue of the supplication of Ibn al-`Abbaas رضي الله عنه and asked him to supplicate Allaah for rain. It is established in the Muslim creed that the dead person cannot benefit or harm himself, and this applies to the Prophet ﷺ, so how about those who are lower than him in status?!

b. Three Types Of Prohibited *Tawassul*

i. *Tawassul* by a righteous man's person is an example of the prohibited *Tawassul*.

ii. *Tawassul* by virtue of a person's high status, right, or honor (in the sight of Allaah), and similar reasons, is another prohibited *Tawassul*.

iii. Swearing by Allaah (that something would happen) by virtue of a person is another example of Prohibited *Tawassul*.

Anyone who wishes to read more on this subject should check out the book by Shaikh al-Albaanee, "*al-Tawassul*, Its types and its rulings", and "*Fiqh al-`Ibaadaat"* by Shaikh Ibn al-`Uthaymeen.

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات

All Praise is for Allaah (Alone), by Whose grace good deeds are accomplished.